

Soviets say summit still on course

MOSCOW (R) — The Soviet Union said Saturday next month's summit between President Mikhail Gorbachev and U.S. President George Bush would go ahead as planned. "On this question, there are no changes," Foreign Ministry spokesman Vitaly Churkin told a news conference. He said the summit would go ahead as planned from Feb. 11 to 13. Mr. Churkin had been asked about a meeting on Friday between Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh and the U.S. ambassador to Moscow. The White House this week suggested the Moscow summit, the fifth formal meeting between Mr. Gorbachev and Mr. Bush, might be called off because of last weekend's Soviet army crackdown in Lithuania. Churkin said Soviet and U.S. representatives would meet in Washington on Monday at the level of deputy foreign minister to put finishing touches to a treaty that will cut long-range nuclear arsenals. The signing of a strategic arms reductions (START) treaty is the centrepiece of the summit.

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Allies pound Iraq; missiles hit Tel Aviv

Iraq says Israeli jets taking part in bombings

Combined agency dispatches

ALLIED BOMBERS continued to pour explosives into Iraq Saturday in a bid to secure air supremacy in the three-day-old Gulf war, but failed to silence Iraqi launchers which lobbed several Scud missiles into Israel for the second day running.

Iraq said its missile attacks on Israel would hasten the liberation of Palestine and that the Israelis already had tried to retaliate.

The second wave of Iraqi missiles hit Israel as officials in Baghdad appealed to Muslims worldwide to attack Western interests.

Iraqi radio broadcast a military communiqué saying the latest missile strike turned Tel Aviv into a "crematorium."

Iraq said there were only slight injuries, but most stories filed from the Jewish state underwent "significant deletions," news agencies reported.

Baghdad Radio, quoted a

military spokesman as saying there was "irrefutable proof" that Israeli warplanes had joined in attacks on Iraq.

It dismissed as "subterfuge."

Western appeals for Israel not to retaliate for Iraq's missile raids.

Baghdad Radio, quoting a statement by a military spokesman, said: "It has been proved to us with concrete material evidence that Zionist enemy aircraft participated in the aggressive operations."

"We will present some of this

evidence to the public at the appropriate time," the radio quoted the spokesman as saying.

The broadcast added: "It appears that the statements made by certain officials in some Western countries and their appeals to Israel not to participate in the aggression are aimed at deceiving public opinion."

Israel denied the claim.

The Iraqi spokesman also said that Israel launched an unsuccessful missile attack Friday night on Iraq's air base at Al Habbaniyah, near Baghdad.

Baghdad radio announced the latest attack on Israel as it took place, interrupting a broadcast to say, "This moment we are launching 11 missiles at the aggressive operations."

"Tomorrow is near. Palestine will be liberated," the radio said, quoting a military communiqué.

The radio said in a separate commentary that all those opposing Iraq faced "destructive surprises... that will come to them one after another whether they expect them or not."

According to the radio, "scores of their (allies') planes are piling up daily." It said 101 allies planes had been downed since the war began, contrasting with eight reported by the allies.

Iraqi media said military authorities had offered rewards to people who capture downed allied pilots. The rewards were 20,000 dinars for non-Iraqis who capture pilots and 10,000 dinars for Iraqis (\$32,000 at the official rate).

Citizens were asked to cooperate with the media in helping to obtain photographs of downed

(Continued on page 5)



His Majesty King Hussein Saturday addresses a press conference in Amman (Photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

King appeals for halt to hostilities in Gulf

By Abdullah Hasanat
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday called for a halt to hostilities in the Gulf war and a resort to diplomacy to end the crisis. The King indicated that his appeal for peace can be seen as a call for a ceasefire "if anyone responds."

"If military action could be brought to a halt then... (there) would be an opportunity to seriously try to seek a political solution, a diplomatic solution satisfactory to all," the King told a press conference at the Royal Court. Asked whether he was calling for a ceasefire, the King replied: "If anyone responds."

King Hussein said he hoped "the present slide towards the tragic, disastrous and unknown unknowns will be halted as soon as possible." He stressed, however, that he was not speaking on behalf of Iraq or anybody else and that he had no contact with the Iraqi

leadership since the start of hostilities.

The King warned that the Gulf war would have a great impact on the future of the

Middle East region and its people and the world as well for

(Continued on page 5)

Not older, more sublime

DESPITE his and Jordan's sombre — and largely depressed — mood, His Majesty the King looked well and laid back at his press conference yesterday. It was at best that he looked in nearly six months of the Gulf crisis that erupted into war on Jan. 17. It is probably because, like the rest of Jordanians, he has resigned himself to the fact that the war has started inspite of all valiant Jordanian efforts to avert it, and, maybe, he might have been able to sleep a few hours last night. During the noisy conference, in which 150 journalists from all over the world could not organise themselves in a good questioning group, the King had an added reason to look in better shape. His newly-grown beard had almost fully grown in place. Asked why he now had a beard, the King offered an instant answer: He had a rash and not shaving would have helped to get rid of it. Then the King volunteered a more sublime and direct answer. His grandfather, the founder of the Kingdom, King Abdullah had a beard. "He told me that he might be the last of the Hashemites to grow a beard. After 38 years in power and 55 years of age, I think I have the right to grow a beard," the King said with a broad smile on his face — A.H.

Washington contacts Iraqi envoy

WASHINGTON (AP) — Iraq's top diplomat in Washington was called to the State Department unexpectedly Saturday, and U.S. officials said one purpose was to discuss prisoners of war.

It was the first diplomatic contact reported between the United States and Iraq since before the war began.

Khalid Al Shewayish, the Iraqi diplomat, was told that his government, like all others, is obliged to "provide humane treatment" to prisoners of war.

Mr. Shewayish, the deputy chief of mission, is in charge of the four-man Iraqi embassy in Washington since the ambassador departed for Iraq.

A man who answered the telephone at the Iraqi embassy confirmed that the diplomat went to the State Department.

He was given a letter telling Iraq that the United States will abide by its obligations and that "it expected Iraq to do the same."

Cable News Network showed the Iraqi diplomat leaving the State Department. He would not comment, he said, until he had read the letter.

He saw Edmund Hall, a low-level State Department official.

The State Department, meanwhile, issued a statement on the "legal obligations regarding POWs."

It said the United States and Iraq are parties to the 1919 Geneva Convention.

"As such, both nations are obligated to provide humane treatment of POWs," the statement said.

On Saturday, the United States announced the capture of the first Iraqi POWs since hostilities broke out. Iraq also has claimed the capture of allied pilots shot down over Iraq.

Israeli involvement in Gulf war will be disastrous — Polyakov

Combined agency dispatches

MOSCOW'S AMBASSADOR TO Cairo warned Saturday that Israeli military involvement in the Gulf war would widen its scope and lead to "dire consequences."

And Soviet Ambassador Vladimir Polyakov said this may be what Iraq intended when it launched missiles into Israel, inviting possible Israeli military reprisals.

The Gulf war was the subject as Mr. Polyakov met with President Hosni Mubarak Saturday to deliver a message from the Soviet president, Mikhail Gorbachev.

The ambassador refused to divulge contents of the message.

But he told reporters Moscow has been trying without success

(Continued on page 5)

Safwat Al Sherif, information minister and the government's

(Continued on page 5)

chief spokesman, refused to answer directly reporters' questions about Egypt's position if Israel should retaliate with military strikes against Iraq.

Speaking in Russian through an Arabic interpreter, Mr. Polyakov assailed Iraq's post-midnight missile attacks against Israel Friday and Saturday.

Asked about possible Israeli retaliation, Mr. Polyakov said: "I can assure you that Israeli involvement in this war would widen its scope, and this would have dire consequences. Maybe this is (Iraq's) objective."

After his talks with Mr. Polyakov, Mr. Mubarak conferred with key members of his cabinet about the missile attacks on Israel.

Mr. Mubarak said last week he would oppose unprovoked Israeli military action against Iraq but would accept retaliation

(Continued on page 5)

Iran says it is neutral in war despite deputies' call for jihad

Combined agency dispatches

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Iran's top policy-making group Saturday reaffirmed Tehran's neutral stance in the Gulf war despite calls in parliament for a holy war against the U.S. and its allies.

The declaration from a national security council meeting gained further authority by the rare attendance of supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The council stressed the "neutral position of the Islamic Republic of Iran towards the 'Persian' war," the Iranian news agency IRNA reported.

The declaration followed calls in the Iranian parliament and press for a holy war against the United States, solidarity with Iraq and an end to Tehran's neutrality in the war launched by U.S.-led multinational forces to drive Baghdad's troops from Kuwait.

IRNA said the council, chaired by President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, also warned Israel against "spreading the war to other Islamic countries" and reiterated Iran's full support for the Palestinian cause.

It decided that Iran should step up diplomatic efforts for a quick end to the war and a solution to the crisis.

Irani missile attacks on Israel won praise earlier from Deputy Qorbanali Salehabadi who urged Mr. Rafsanjani's government to cut economic and political links with countries actively engaged in war against Iraq. IRNA reported.

"Every missile that hits Tel Aviv, Haifa or elsewhere in Israel is as if they are striking the White House or other American centres and shaking the foundation of the world-devouring United States," Mr. Salehabadi

(Continued on page 5)

ayatollah Sadeq Khalkhali to declare jihad against the United States and its Western allies in the and-Iraq coalition, the agency said.

"We should not leave the Iranian people standing alone in this battle since if the United States emerges victorious it will not leave the region easily," Ayatollah Khalkhali said.

The remarks, made at the first regular session of the parliament since the outbreak of the war Thursday, sharply contrasted with the government's neutral position.

Soon after U.S. and allied forces launched air and missile strikes on Iraq, Mr. Rafsanjani denounced the war as a catastrophe for Muslims brought about by Baghdad's "mistake" of seizing Kuwait.

Gorbachev seeks EC role in Gulf initiative; India floats formula

King receives Soviet message

LUXEMBOURG (Agencies) — The Soviet Union has urged Luxembourg, the current chairman of the European Community (EC), to join its appeal for Arab and Israeli leaders to act with restraint in the Gulf, a government spokesman said Saturday.

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said in a letter to Luxembourg's Prime Minister Jacques Santer Friday that he was "concerned and worried" by Iraq's missile attack on Israeli cities Thursday night.

Luxembourg, as current holder of the EC's rotating presidency, has been largely responsible for coordinating the 12-member organisation's Gulf policy.

The spokesman could not confirm whether other EC leaders had received a similar message.

Mr. Gorbachev told Mr. Santer that he had contacted Israeli and Arab leaders and suggested it would be helpful if he would do the same, the spokesman said.

The EC issued a statement

(Continued on page 5)

Arab and Islamic protests spread

Combined agency dispatches

IRAQ'S MISSILE strikes on Israel deepened a rift in the Muslim world with the public in many countries jubilant at the attack on an old enemy, but Arab allies in the U.S.-led anti-Iraq coalition holding firm.

From Mauritania to Pakistan and from Niger to Sudan hundreds of thousands of demonstrators took to the streets Friday and Saturday, hailing the assault on the Jewish state and denouncing the U.S.-led bombing of Iraq and Kuwait.

But Egypt, Syria and Arab Gulf states with troops in the multinational force confronting Iraq stood by their commitment to the alliance.

Many Arabs were elated that Israel's seemingly invulnerable armed forces were powerless to stop the rockets.

Referring to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak the demonstrators said "Shame on you the Arab of the dollar," and "Saddam hit America and its allies" were some of the slogans chanted during the four-hour demonstration.

(Continued on page 5)

The JANA news agency said the demonstrations in Tripoli

American and Egyptian embassies and did not allow the crowds to approach them, but otherwise allowed the demonstrators to move freely through downtown Khartoum.

Hundreds of thousands of Sudanese chanted anti-American and anti-Egyptian slogans Saturday as they demonstrated in support of Iraq.

The demonstration was the largest in Khartoum in recent memory, drawing crowds bigger than those which forced the military to overthrow President Jaafar Numeiri in April 1985.

"Down, down USA," "Death, death to Israel and the Satan (USA)" and "Saddam hit America and its allies" were some of the slogans chanted during the four-hour demonstration.

The mass demonstration in Algiers was organised by the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), which has become the country's biggest opposition party since it was legalised by President Chadli Benjedid in March 1989.

Algerian Foreign Minister Sid

(Continued on page 5)

Japanese opposition urges government to seek Gulf truce

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Japanese Socialist Party has urged the Japanese government to press for a cease-fire for the conflict in the Gulf.

The party's secretary general, Ms. Takako Doi, urged Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu "not to express full support for the American military actions but to call upon the U.N. to make efforts for de-escalation of hostilities and cease-fire."

Ms. Doi was recently in Amman and discussed with His Royal Highness Prince Hassan the situation in the Gulf.

Following is the text of Ms. Doi's Jan. 18 statement on the Gulf crisis as telefaxed to the Jordan Times.

What Prime Minister Kaifu should do is not to express full support to the American military actions but to call upon the U.N. to make efforts for de-escalation of hostilities and cease-fire. Every channel for dialogue should be utilised for peace and cease-fire.

The military actions of the multi-national forces now seem to have exceeded the goal of the



Takako Doi

ing to the request of international institutions.

With regard to the relations with the Middle East, unlike other western countries, Japan is free of imperialist or colonialist image. Japan has not been involved in arms trade with Iraq.

On Palestinian issue, Japan is one of the states supporting the U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338. And Japan keeps good relations with the U.S. All of these facts tell that Japan is the most qualified country to take the peace initiative.

Japan should not render any further support to war but should devote itself to recovery of peace.

Gorbachev firm on Gulf, right-wing pressure grows

By Richard Balmforth
Reuters

MOSCOW — President Mikhail Gorbachev is standing firmly behind Washington in the Gulf war but Moscow's commitment could come under pressure from powerful military and communist hardliners at home.

Gorbachev, who has blamed Iraq's Saddam Hussein for the war, lent further support to the anti-Iraqi coalition Friday, telling Arab leaders not to be tempted to attack Israel following Baghdad's missile strikes on it.

He also appealed to Israeli leaders to show maximum restraint and not retaliate. Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Belonogov said:

"Up to now, there does not seem to be any wavering by Moscow in its commitment to United Nations resolutions. The Kremlin is saying all the right things," said a Western diplomat.

The diplomat pointed also to Mr. Gorbachev's appointment of the liberal pro-detente Alexander Bessmertnykh as foreign minister and Mr. Gorbachev's regular contacts with U.S. President George Bush and other Western leaders since war erupted.

Mounting pressure from communist and military hardliners has driven Gorbachev towards the conservative camp on the Soviet Union's Baltic republics and other internal policy issues and opened a breach with his liberal erstwhile supporters.

Analysts say that though Soviet policy on the Gulf has been clearly spelled out at the United Nations, Mr. Gorbachev may find it difficult to ignore the views of the right wing, especially if the war escalates.

Radicals and liberals plan a major demonstration in Moscow Sunday to demand removal of all officials responsible for ordering last week's army action in Lithuania in which 13 unarmed people and one paratrooper were killed.

Yevgeny Ambartsumov, a deputy in the Russian Federation parliament, said Friday that reports of troop concentrating around Moscow for similar action against the secessionist leadership were being investigated.

Mr. Ambartsumov was quoted by the unofficial news agency Interfax as saying the reports had not yet been confirmed.

In the three Baltic republics, many senior military officers, nostalgic for the era of intense cooperation when Moscow was Baghdad's main arms supplier, are known to be deeply suspicious of Mr. Gorbachev's backing of the United States in the war.

Further signs of this dissent surfaced Friday.

"Can only Iraq be blamed for the war? ... Was there really no possibility of preventing it?" demanded Sovietskaya Rossiya, a pro-conservative organ of the

Russian Communist Party. Diplomats recognise that Moscow's political interests in the Middle East, already transformed by the Gulf crisis, will become even more problematic if the war escalates.

"If Israel joins the war and Moscow's other Arab friends get dragged in, Gorbachev would be really on the spot," one diplomat said.

On Friday, senior military figures branded radical Boris Yeltsin, Gorbachev's main rival and president of the giant Russian Federation, an "anti-patriot" for begging soldiers not to fire on civilians in the Baltic republics.

Mr. Yeltsin's aides said they were not counting on support from the Mr. Gorbachev, whose liberal supporters are now disowning him as he retreats from his reformist policies.

Yeltsin aide Valentina Lantseva said her chief and his supporters "expect an extreme reactionary offensive... we expect nothing from Gorbachev except reaction, black reaction."

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United States in the course of military activities under way in the region, not one of them has been injured," he said in remarks quoted by the official TASS news agency.

A Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman said earlier that Moscow was maintaining close diplomatic contact with Baghdad and the safety of Soviet citizens there was assured.

He said a new initiative to end the Gulf war could not be ruled out. But there had been no response to Soviet appeals to Iraq to pull its troops out of Kuwait.

U.N. diplomats said President Gorbachev plans a personal appeal to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein urging him to announce his agreement for an immediate withdrawal from Kuwait.

U.S. war costs near \$500m a day

WASHINGTON (R) — The intense air attacks on targets in Iraq and Kuwait are costing the United States upwards of \$500 million a day, government and private analysts said.

Not even the U.S. Defence Department can yet know the exact financial cost of the initial assault in which 2,107 aircraft sorties were flown against targets in Iraq and Kuwait in the first 46 hours of the fighting.

Even with limited information on the aircraft and ordnance used in the attacks, analysts in the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) and the private Defence Budget Project said very rough estimates can be made of the cost of the Gulf operation above the peacetime Defence Department costs.

The Pentagon and Congress make available costs of weapons and aircraft. The Pentagon has

not released its estimate of the cost of fighting Iraq in Operation Desert Storm.

"There is no way to know everything expended, all the large and small munitions," Alexis Cain of the Defence Budget Project said. "The actual cost of flying is a small fraction of the cost of the mission," he said.

The biggest variable is in the cost of the munitions expended and whether the Pentagon will buy replacements.

Each Tomahawk missile fired cost about \$1.3 million. The Pentagon said 100 were fired in the first day.

The one Patriot missile that intercepted an Iraqi Scud headed for Dhahran, Saudi Arabia cost \$1.1 million.

Each of the 2,107 air sorties averaged \$100,000 when conventional bombs were dropped, and could have reached \$1 million.

"There is a curfew until further notice. Whoever violates the curfew would be risking his life," Israeli army vehicles broadcasting to reinforce a curfew in the occupied territories.

"Everybody feels bitter and is disappointed and frustrated. People are in shock," Saeb Erekat, a political science professor at Najaah University in the West Bank city of Nablus.

"A safe area has been created in the ... disco and the Al Badiyah banquet rooms," sign in one of Amman's hotel.

"It was a very good day for consumers," Koil Trader Peter Gignoux of Lehman Brothers International after oil prices fell \$10 a barrel to close around \$20.

"Signing off from Baghdad for CNN and hope that we can resume our communications with you in the very near future," the three CNN reporters in Baghdad when the Iraqi authorities closed down their communications to the outside world.

"I am afraid of very serious consequences reflecting on the Arabs and American people in the future," Libyan Leader Muammar Qaddafi in a television appeal for an end to the conflict.

"If at any point he (Saddam Hussein) wants to change course here all he has to do is surrender and comply with all the U.N. resolutions," White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater.

"Barbaric raids by enemy aircraft on Iraqi towns and villages left 23 martyrs and 66 others wounded," the Iraq News Agency.

"Today is one of the bitter days in our lives and in all Muslims' lives that we see Muslims and their resources being destroyed by arrogant powers led by the hegemonist and aggressive United States," Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani.

"The attack on Israel is coming. The decision has been taken. The timing is of course a secret," Iraq's ambassador to Belgium.

"The pause for peace mandated by the United Nations Security

Council Resolution 678 is over," U.S. State Department spokeswoman.

"There's not much I can do. It depends on Iraq, whether Iraq capitulates," U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

"You imagined that threats will make Iraq kneel. Withdraw your forces and the forces of your allies. This is the only path," Saddam Hussein in a message to George Bush.

"There is an emergency in Tel Aviv ... I can hear ... explosions" a Cable News Network reporter in Tel Aviv on the Iraqi missile strike.

"This was the day I have waited for since I was born" Palestinian Yousef Omri, in Jordan, on the Iraqi attack.

"We are going to be redoubling our efforts in the darnedest search-and-destroy effort that's ever been undertaken out in that area," U.S. President George Bush, pledging to destroy Iraqi missile launchers.

"In the history of the Arab World did you see any Arab leader fire a missile at Israel? Only Saddam Hussein did it" Jordanian Nahla Sweis celebrating the Iraqi attack.

"We have said publicly and to the Americans that if we were attacked we would react. We were attacked" Israeli defence Minister Moshe Arens.

"This is a dangerous turn of events ... We view it with great concern because it is fraught with the most grave consequences," A spokesman for Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

"Whoever took parts of the missiles that fell this morning is requested to return them immediately to the nearest police station for analysis" Israeli army asking souvenir hunters to return Iraqi missile fragments.

"It will be partly cloudy and rainy at times, and a drop in temperatures will take place in Aqaba. It will be partly cloudy and there will be a chance for scattered showers of rain."

Min/max. temp. 4/11
Aqaba 8/18
Deserts 3/16

Amman 8/18
Aqaba 8/18
Deserts 3/16

Sinai 8/18

Public Security Department 6/3/21

Fire Brigades 7/2/21

Blood Bank 7/2/21

Highway Police 8/4/24

Traffic Police 8/4/24

Police Security Department 8/9/30

Hotel Complaints 6/5/80

Hussein Medical Centre 8/13/32

AMMAN:

Food Control Centre 6/7/11

Civil Defence Department 6/6/11

Civil Defense Immediate Rescue 6/3/41

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192, 6/2/11, 6/3/77

Police 6/2/24

Fire Brigades 6/2/24

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Malaysia wants Mecca and Medina as open cities

KUALA LUMPUR (AP) —

Malaysia has proposed that Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia be declared "open cities" to ensure their permanent protection from any disaster arising from war or violent conflict in the region.

Foreign Minister Abu Hassan Omar made the proposal in the House of Representatives when winding up the debate on a motion on the "Implications of the Gulf war and the role of Malaysia."

Speaking to reporters later, Mr. Abu Hassan said the proposal would be forwarded to the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) before being brought up at the United Nations.

He said under the open cities proposal no one would invade them, but did not elaborate.

Mr. Abu Hassan said Malaysia would make the proposal at an opportune time.

No vote was taken on the motion as the allotted time of one hour to debate it ended just when Mr. Abu Hassan finished his

winding-up speech.

Mr. Abu Hassan said that Malaysia, a Muslim nation, will not budge from its stand of championing the interests of Muslims.

He said he viewed with "serious concern and regret" the outbreak of war in the Gulf.

The official, however, called on Iraq to withdraw unconditionally from Kuwait and allow the emir to be returned to its people and "legitimate rulers."

Mr. Abu Hassan also pointed out that in discussions in Jeddah before the invasion of Kuwait, Iraq did not at all raise the issue of Palestine but only the question of Kuwait's debts and other demands.

Only after the international community condemned the invasion, did Iraq try to connect the Palestinian issue with it annexation of Kuwait, he said.

U.S. navy says ships enter Gulf at own risk

BAHRAIN (R) — The U.S. navy warned merchant ships Saturday they entered the Gulf at their own risk after mines were confirmed floating off Bahrain and were reported off the United Arab Emirates.

A statement issued by the commander of U.S. navy forces in the Middle East, Admiral William Fogarty, said there was also a potential risk of

Cash fever subsides

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Banking operations in the country have returned to almost normal after a week of heavy cash withdrawals in the run-up to the explosion of war in the Gulf, several leading banks reported Saturday.

"We have all indications that frenzied withdrawals have subsided," said a senior official at the Arab Bank, the leading commercial bank in Jordan. "Those who wanted to withdraw money have already done so, although nowhere near the level that we witnessed in the first few days of August," he added.

According to Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) figures, as much as JD 150 million were withdrawn from private accounts and deposits in the first few weeks after the Aug. 2 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. There was a marked reversal of the process since mid-October — when signs were strong that a peaceful solution to the crisis was in the offing — and most of the money was returned to the accounts by December, CBJ Governor Mohammad Saeed Al Nabulsi said.

Senior officials of the Housing Bank and the Bank of Jordan agreed with the Arab Bank official's assertion although sizeable queues were spotted at the counters of several banks in the capital Saturday.

"At one branch in Amman today, we had cash withdrawals of JD 7,000 and deposits of JD 3,000," said a Housing Bank official. "For us it is normal for an average day," he added.

The withdrawal-deposit ratio was more or less typical of the day's transactions as reported to the Jordan Times by several other banking officials.

In contrast, some banks had reported totally disproportionate withdrawal and deposits last week; in some cases as much as JD 40,000 were with-

drawn against deposits of less than JD 10,000 from a single branch.

Dr. Fawaz noted that commercial banks were providing enough liquidity in foreign exchange and meeting the needs of the market without having to exercise their option of accepting the Central Bank's offer to step in wherever needed.

"This boosts people's confidence in the banking system," he said.

Dr. Waked said many clients had been listening to his advice to keep just enough cash for one month's expenses.

"I would not describe it as panic withdrawals," he said. "Yes, there was a rush for cash, but the volume involved was not very high; definitely not in terms of tens of millions."

Dr. Fahed Fawaz, an analyst who keeps a close watch on banking movements in the country, estimated that JD 30 million were withdrawn from private accounts during last week.

"It is a war situation and we don't have the least idea how it is going to turn out," he said. "I don't want to be one whose money is in the bank round the corner but unable to get to it when I need it."

A supermarket owner who preferred anonymity said he was "keeping just enough cash in the bank to cover cheques on a daily basis."

"I don't want to be under the mercy of the banks when I need money in a hurry," he added.

"It is not new for Jordan to undergo such an experience," he said. "We have had this experience during the 1956 and 1967 wars as well as the Iran-Iraq war," he recalled.

But, Dr. Anani said, most people "are now banging onto their money in cash... just in case."

"It is not as if they are rushing to buy foreign exchange and keep it... at the same time they are not spending it either," he said. "Even importers are taking it easy on their purchases."

The exchange rate of the Jordanian dinar both in the official banking circles and in the parallel "black" market has remained steady for several weeks now, indicating no

change in the official, speaking or operation of anonymity.

House cables appeal for help to stop aggression on Muslim Iraq

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Lower House of Parliament Saturday sent cables to Arab, Islamic and friendly parliaments and oatician assemblies in a number of nations urging them to intervene and do all they can to stop the war in the Gulf.

At this very critical moment in the history of the nations in this region we implore you to take a wise and courageous step and help stop the ongoing military aggression by the United States and its allies against Iraq, said a cable addressed to the speaker and members of the national assembly of Pakistan.

History will never forgive any indifference towards the crime being committed against a Muslim nation and we urge you to take whatever necessary steps to stop the aggression," the cable continued.

It said that the Jordanian people hope Pakistan's Muslim people will not participate in the present aggression on Iraq.

A cable sent to the Iranian parliament voiced Jordanian parliament's appreciation to Iran's honorable stand in the face of the U.S., the "Great Satan" and the main enemy of the Islamic World.

"Since the start of the Gulf crisis, your House took a very honourable stand which has been instrumental in exposing the United States and its allies and stooges and which helped spread awareness among the various Islamic people to Washington's evil intentions in the region," the cable said.

The Lower House also sent cables to the Syrian People's Assembly to speak of Syria's national role against the imperialist nations, and urged the Syrian people to help thwart America's current aggression on Iraq. "The Israeli enemy stands to benefit from the aggression on Iraq which, along with the honourable Arabs, expects Syrian help to confront the invaders," the cable said.

The Lower House also sent cables to the International Parliamentary Union and the European parliaments urging them to find means to settle the problems of the Middle East, particularly the Palestine question, and to end the aggression on Iraq.

The cable urged Iran and its people to maintain their strong and honourable stand in the face of the criminal forces and to lead the Islamic nation against the forces of evil.

Another cable went to the Turkish national assembly urging the Muslim nation to refrain from participating in the ongoing aggression against Iraq or encouraging others to participate in the war.

The cable said "history will never forgive any condoning of crimes committed by a Muslim nation against another special Iraq which has never launched attacks on Turkey and which has

always retained good neighbourly relations with the Turkish nation and indeed contributed to its economic progress."

The cable urged the Turkish national assembly to do all it can to stop the hostilities and refrain from committing Turkey to any aggression on Iraq.

The Lower House also sent a cable to the Egyptian Peoples Assembly noting that the Egyptian people have always supported Arab and Islamic countries and contributed towards their liberation. The cable urged the Egyptian parliaments to adopt an honourable stand vis-a-vis the American aggression on Iraq.

The aggression on Iraq can only serve the interests of Israel which has been occupying Arab land in Palestine, Golani, and Lebanon and suppressing Arab people and launching aggression on neighbouring Arab states," said the cable. "Arab Nation looks to you for help and expects that you will never let them down by assisting the aggression."

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RJ resumes U.S., Canada flights

AMMAN (J.T.) — Royal Jordanian (RJ), the national air carrier, announced Saturday the resumption of its flights to the United States and Canada and said that flights to Larnaca in Cyprus and Vienna in Austria would continue.

An RJ statement said that one of its aircraft will make the flight to the United States and Canada, thus ending a three-day stoppage of RJ flights to these destinations.

The statement gave the following telephone number to be contacted for direct reservation: 678321 or the RJ offices around the Kingdom. The statement noted that RJ flights to Larnaca and Vienna would continue on daily basis.

Asked to give more details about further flights to the U.S. and Canada, RJ officials said that there were no set schedules for further flights.

Thursday, RJ announced that Jordanian airports were operating and open to receive planes from all countries, but said that RJ aircraft would be grounded for the time being in view of the situation in the Gulf.

Director-general of the Queen Alia International Airport, Ahmad Jweibie, said that Jordanian airspace was open for all flights but that foreign airlines operating from and to Amman had suspended flights to Jordan for the time being because of increased war insurance changes.

Government freezes leaves of absence; ministries ready emergency operations

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordanian government employees cannot get leave of absence from now and until further notice to view of the present emergency situation in the region, according to an official communiqué issued by the prime minister's office Saturday.

The communiqué also said that those civil servants and employees already on leave should return to their work immediately.

An earlier statement from the Ministry of Education suspended Tawjih mid-year examinations until further notice but all government departments have been operating normally six days a week.

A statement said that a series of meetings were held at the ministry in Amman to coordinate its departments services with those of the Jordan National Red Crescent Society, the General Union of Voluntary Societies, the Federation of Jordanian Labour Unions, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, the doctors, nurses and pharmacists associations and other organisations.

At the meetings a general review of hospital facilities and their capabilities to deal with emergencies was made.

Srour inspects water stations

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Water and Irrigation says its emergency plan to ensure water to various regions under all conditions and in the face of all emergency cases has been in operation for more than a week now.

According to ministry officials, Water and Irrigation Minister Saad Hayel Srour has been visiting various water pumping stations and discussing with ministry and Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) engineers arrangements for ensuring water supplies to different areas.

The minister has visited the Jordan Valley region and the Deir Alla water purification station there, as well as the King Abdulla Canal which supplies irrigation water to Jordan Valley farmlands.

The ministry has installed 23

mini-operation rooms in the various governorates manned by specialists, engineers and officials working for 24 hours a day, said the minister in a statement upon the inception of the emergency plan.

Srour said the ministry has provided various pumping stations with alternative means to ensure continuous water pumping should the main power supply fail for any reason.

According to Acting Secretary General Mahmoud Al Hiyari, sufficient water supplies exist in the Kingdom at present, but the problem that Jordan would be facing might emerge in the summer starting from mid-May should there be no rainfall in the coming two months.

Hiyari told the Jordan Times that along with the emergency plan now in operation, the

ministry's water distribution programme introduced in the summer of 1990 would continue until further notice and until sufficient water has been collected.

The ministry estimates that Jordan uses 180 million cubic metres of water annually for domestic purposes, an amount expected to rise to 260 million by the year 2005 due to population growth.

It said that 350 million cubic metres are annually used in agriculture, but more supplies would be needed if agricultural projects are to be expanded.

According to Hiyari, the water level in the dams is now dangerously low but it is hoped that the coming two months will bring in rain to replenish the reservoirs.

Pope deplores Gulf war

AMMAN (J.T.) — Over the past few weeks as the Gulf crisis increased in intensity, many people of the Middle East region turned their attention to the Vatican, and to His Holiness Pope John Paul II, the present-day missionary of peace, according to a statement here Saturday by Monsignor Raouf Najjar, representative of the Apostolic delegation in Jordan.

Dr. Najjar told the Jordan Times that the Pope has received numerous appeals — including those of the Jordanian people's delegation and the Middle East Christian bishops delegation — urging him to undertake a personal intervention with president George Bush and Saddam Hussein to help find a way to establish peace in the region.

In response to the appeals, Dr. Najjar said, the Pope addressed messages to the two presidents on Jan. 15, calling on them to put an end to hostilities and all forms of violence, and to try to find an effective means for averting war. But despite the appeals, he said, the war did break out, prompting His Holiness the Pope to issue the following appeal to the world community from the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica:

This meeting with you, my dear fellows, is taking place at a moment of deep sadness for my heart as Father and Pastor of the

Universal Church.

The news which has reached us concerning the drama taking place in the Gulf region has evoked in me and — I am sure — in all of you feelings of deep sadness and great unease.

Up to the last moment, I prayed and hoped that this would not happen, and I have done everything humanly possible to avert a tragedy.

My sorrow derives from the thought of the victims, the destruction and the suffering which war can cause. I feel particularly close to all those who because of it are suffering, on both sides.

This sorrow is made even more acute by the fact that beginning of this war also marks a grave defeat for international law and the international community.

In these hours of great dangers, I would like to repeat forcibly that war cannot be an adequate means for completely solving problems existing between nations. It has been over and it never will be!

I continue to hope that what has begun will end as quickly as possible. I pray that the experience of this first day of conflict will be enough to make people understand the need for the aspirations and rights of all the peoples of the region to be made the subject of a particular commitment on the part of the inter-

national community. It is a question of problems the solution of which can only be sought in an international meeting at which all the interested parties are present and cooperate frankly and calmly.

I have wished to share this moment of sorrow, and to invite all of you to keep praying to the Lord that He may grant better times to the human family.

I still place my hope in courageous gestures which can shorten the time of trial, re-establish international order and enable the Star of Peace which one day shone over Bethlehem to cast its light once more over that region which is so dear to us.

Mauritania, site of huge pro-

tests

Baghdad demonstrations in recent days, has condemned the U.S.-led military attacks on Iraq and called for an immediate ceasefire.

"Iraq has been the target of a serious aggression. The massive attacks go far beyond the objective of liberating Kuwait," the government said in a statement.

"All Arab countries, the Arab World and all peace-loving nations must work for an immediate end to hostilities. Once peace is restored all the region's problems can be resolved in a peaceful manner."

Some 5,000 people demonstrated in the Mauritanian capital Nouakchott Friday in support of Iraq in one of the biggest pro-

tests ever seen in the country.

Iraqi hits on Israel arouse emotional response

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Popular reaction in Jordan to the continued aerial bombardment of Baghdad by the U.S.-led multi-national forces was one of extreme anger. The amount of explosives used in the bombing of Iraq, which His Majesty King Hussein said Saturday exceeded that of the nuclear bomb used against Hiroshima in 1945, was seen by most Jordanians as a savage attempt by the superpower and its allies to destroy the capabilities of the Arab Nation as a whole.

While most Jordanians realize that it is unlikely that Iraq could militarily defeat the U.S. and its multi-national forces arrayed against it, they are outraged at the arrogance and the intensity of the bombing of Baghdad and other Iraqi cities.

"They have no mercy and Saddam should have no mercy on them," said a Jordanian businessman who recently returned from the U.S. "I never want to hear the word civilized again because it simply does not exist — the Western allies are anything but civilized and this war has put the lid on that farce once and for all."

But it was the Iraqi attack on Tel Aviv, the first successful air attack on the Zionist state in 40 years, on the morning of Jan. 18 that aroused the most emotional response from Jordanians, Palestinians and many other Arabs residing in Jordan.

"Thank God," was the first reaction of many when they heard that Iraqi missiles had hit the coastal city.

While many people said that they were relieved that the missiles did not carry chemical warheads, they felt the attack was justified reprisal against a state that built its existence on repressing and expelling the original inhabitants of the land.

"Now I can die in peace," said a 32-year-old mother of three. "Knowing that Israelis feared for their homes and lives gives me satisfaction," said the Palestinian woman, who was expelled from the West Bank in 1967 and had lived through the Israeli bombing of Beirut in 1982.

"Everything that the (President Saddam) has said he would do has done so far," said a 45-year-old Jordanian businessman. "He has kept his word and, in response, he has gained our support and admiration."

"Saddam Hussein did not begin this war, America did," said another Jordanian businessman. "The Americans and the Israelis have been playing poker with the Arab World believing that they could cheat and they fore-

see that from the start. I cannot turn the other cheek; they want me to destroy my existence and thus I want to destroy them," she said.

"It is the happiest day of my life," signed one 50-year-old Palestinian. "After 40 years this illegal, racist and intransigent state which has grown like a cancer in our midst has been defeated."

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Option for a Peruvian

IF THE U.N. secretary-general is to examine the United Nations Charter, he will undoubtedly find himself facing two options: Either to shoulder his duty as set for him by that charter or to declare his impotence and leave the job.

The U.N. Charter's 99th article stipulates that the basic responsibility of the secretary-general is to bring to the attention of the Security Council any problem which he considers detrimental to world peace and security.

The United States is now launching a military aggression on Iraq and the secretary-general sits before his television, set like other ordinary people, following up on the systematic destruction of Iraq and the obliteration of its people and infrastructure oblivious to the fact that this mad war constitutes a serious threat to world peace and security. He would not even volunteer to bring the issue back to the attention of the Security Council.

Many people around the globe believe that Perez de Cuellar's submissiveness to Washington's will and desires since the start of the Gulf crisis has stripped him of his real mission and rendered him a mere tool implementing America's designs against a member state of the U.N. and this region as a whole.

Indeed Perez de Cuellar had been playing the role of accessory to preparations for war, though his real mission, as vested in him by the United Nations Charter, is to prevent wars and to use all that in his power to halt conflicts. His implicit participation in war preparations was manifested in his support for the United States' violations of Article 100 of the U.N. Charter which demands that all U.N. member states undertake the pledge not to influence the secretary-general's duties and to respect his international responsibilities.

But it seems that the secretary-general has totally disregarded this article and succumbed to, either through persuasion or collusion, with the U.S.' desire, and participated in allied preparations for war on Iraq under the pretext of international legitimacy. There is every perception in this part of the world and elsewhere that Perez de Cuellar has subsequently pursued his duties not like a U.N. secretary-general should do, but rather as an employee of the U.S. government by turning a blind eye to the war going on in the Middle East region.

Those who are keen on world peace and security could see by now that the U.N. chief has been rendered impotent and incapable of shouldering his duties, and has indeed consented to turning over the United Nations Organisation to the outreaching hands of the American administration. Thus, to them, his resignation seems to be a necessary first step if he is to absolve himself from the suspect role he has played so far and which opened the door for a war that could spread and undermine peace and security throughout the world. His resignation could regain for the international organisation some respect at least by those Arabs who had so much faith in it, and credibility which he himself lost lately.

Many of us hope that such action by the U.N. chief would restore for him some peace of mind he must have lost as a result of this mad and devastating war that erupted under his aegis.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE Iraqis are fighting the invaders with fire power exceeding anything the Americans had ever seen in Vietnam according to the commander of the American forces attacking Iraq at present said Al Ra'i, Arabic daily Saturday. This commander has expressed his fears that his forces were going to sustain heavy losses in life and equipment should the war drag on, said the paper. These statements, the paper noted, have upset all the calculations of the allied forces who are now realising that the situation is complicated and that the attack on Iraq would not be a bed of roses as they had imagined. It seems that the "desert storm" invasion is now backfiring on the invaders who had hoped to subdue the Iraqi leadership in a lightning war that would end Iraq's presence in Kuwait, the paper continued. The paper said that the longer the war drags on, the more blood is bound to be shed on both sides, and the more is the prospect of involving other parties in the conflict. In addition, the second day of the mother of all battles witnessed demonstrations in numerous nations and also brought the masses in the Arab states aligned behind the Americans to their senses, the paper noted. It said that these masses are not only displaying delight over Iraq's missile strikes against Israeli targets, but also are expected to demand that their governments disentangle themselves from the conflict.

We were not surprised by the anger displayed by George Bush following the Iraqi missile attack on Israeli targets nor did we threat to retaliate against the attack change any of our feelings because we realise Israel's objectives and that it is the Jewish state which dragged the U.S. into this war, said Sawt Al Shabab daily. The Western alliance had planted the Jewish state in our midst for the obvious reason of ensuring its interests and to strike against any Arab country that could threaten Israel and Zionism, the paper said. This mad war which is being waged by the angry American president against Iraq is clearly designed to keep Israel's military edge over the total military force of the Arab states, and as a clear indication that the U.S. administration does not allow any country to try to help the Palestinians regain their rights in their homeland which had been usurped by the Zionists, the paper noted. It said that Bush realised that the Iraqis are insisting on linking the Gulf issue with the Palestine question and that one day it was going to use his military force to liberate Palestine from Israeli occupation. Iraq has launched a missile strike against Israel, in order to emphasise the Arab nation's will and determination to attain its national objectives, said the paper.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Jordanian economy under Gulf war

NOW that the unthinkable became a reality, and war has gripped the Gulf, the question once more presents itself: Can Jordan survive the economic impact of a protracted war?

The Jordanian economy proved itself to be more resilient under difficult circumstances than any analyst previously thought. At the same time the Jordanian people surprised themselves by their ability to take sacrifices and cut down on their standard of living more and more, even when a high ratio of the population are below the line of poverty.

When the foreign exchange crisis of 1988 erupted, economic observers thought that the Jordanian economy was based on shifting sands, and that it will collapse in no time. At the same time political observers thought that Jordan will be hopelessly destabilised if the artificially high standard of living of the people was to be touched.

All that proved to be false. The Jordanian economy did not collapse. It was adjusted, and started to recover and regain confidence and stability faster than was hoped. The Jordanian people realised the facts, absorbed the shock and started to work harder. Within a year the standard of living dropped by around 40 per cent, the employees and working class accepted to go on at the same pre-crisis nominal salaries and wages despite the sharp rise in the cost of living. More over, the tax effort was growing

rapidly despite the economic difficulties. Although the country became weaker financially and economically, it became stronger politically. The fat that was lost started to be replaced by real muscle.

The Gulf crisis which erupted six months ago was Jordan's second strong encounter with tough circumstances. The country lost all Arab oil, one third of expatriates remittances, one quarter of export markets, most of the tourism receipts and the transit business, yet Jordan survived.

The war that started last week is Jordan's third crucial challenge in 28 months. There is no reason to believe that we cannot make it again.

The major dangers which existed before continue under the war scenario that has just started. The Israeli threat and the loss of our only source of crude oil.

Apparently, Israel will not move. Under the strict instructions of the American master, Israel must keep out of the war to save the faces of the Arab leaders who betrayed their Arab Nation and sided with the barbaric aggression on the Iraqi people. If the Israeli intervention became visible, the Americanised Arab regimes will collapse under the anger of their own people.

The Iraqi oil supplies are crucial to Jordan, because the Saudis closed the tapline pipe as of Sept. 19, and Jordan cannot depend

on international oil markets due to lack of facilities and foreign exchange to buy the oil.

The government therefore must take the necessary action to save oil. Gasoline should be rationed or its price temporarily doubled, otherwise movement of all private cars should be banned. Perhaps such action may be taken before this article is published, 48 hours after it was written on Friday.

Jordan successfully passed the foreign exchange crisis, the impact of the Gulf crisis, and will definitely pass the war crisis through accepting the necessary sacrifices.

The only other economic worry is related to the possible influx of evacuees from Iraq and Kuwait. Jordan already decided to prevent such influx unless international institutions give clear cut commitments of underwriting the cost of such an influx, which Jordan is ill prepared to deal with. Hopefully the Jordanian government will not give in on its firm position with only vague promises in return. The cost of handling each evacuee is around \$10,000 and must be paid in advance, otherwise evacuees should go to the Saudi borders where they can be taken to their respective countries by air and sea.

There is no reason to fail in facing the war challenge as long as the government is decisive and the people are willing to understand and cooperate.

By Dr. Fahed Fawek

Israel's possible opportunities in the Gulf war

By Dr. Marwan Rateb Asmar

IN light of the U.N. deadline of Jan. 15 for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait, war broke out between the allied powers headed by the U.S.A. and Britain against Iraq. Israel would be the most likely to gain from the war, exploiting it, for its own political and strategic objectives.

The perception by Israeli policy makers has been an all-out attack on Iraq would serve to redress the balance of power in the Middle East that was tilting in favour of that country in the latter part of the 1980's. Iraq was said to be the fourth largest military power in the world and such was a real military threat to Israel. A surgical strike against Iraq by the multinational force was viewed with favour in Israel since it would weaken Baghdad by undermining its military capability, its ability to initiate what was seen as military aggression, and hence the Iraqi will forge a new regional order based on the hegemony of Iraq.

Israel would be able to achieve all of this, especially if it was able to keep Kuwait, since she not only would have direct access to the waters of the Gulf, thus giving herself a strategic edge, but more importantly would hold and control 20 per cent of the world's proven oil reserves.

This war would be seen by Israel as a way of breaking the stranglehold that Iraq would be in a position to impose by again, re-adjusting the balance of power in the Middle East.

Another factor which is considered to be at the heart of Israel's support for the war against Iraq must be to do with her failure to suppress the intifada, now entering its fourth year.

The inability to quell the uprisings has created a great deal of anxiety among the Israeli political establishment, some of whom are arguing for more brutal force to be used against it. Above all, the intifada has initiated an ongoing debate in Israeli social, political and military circles about the best way of handling it.

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The Intifada and Israel

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granting the Palestinians an independent state, while others would only concede to granting them autonomy, and still there

are others, a growing sizeable minority who believe that the best way of maintaining Israeli security is by expelling the whole or a big group of the Palestinians, notably to Jordan.

It is the latter idea of expulsion, euphemistically called transfer, that has been gaining a lot of ground amongst a rejuvenated right wing culture in Israel, expressed in new parliamentary parties, such as Tehiya, Moledet and Tzomet. Together, with a Likud-led government that is reputed to be one of the most right wing in Israel's history, the concept of transfer is increasingly seen as the only way to rid Israel of its Palestinian population and establish an exclusively Jewish state based on the concept of Eretz Israel. For many Israelis, the opportunity to carry out this monstrous plan is presented by the Gulf war as specifically stated by the leader of Moledet.

The Gulf war and the direct weakening of Iraq as a major regional power would enable Israel to deal more effectively with the intifada. Ideas of transfer, mass expulsion, selective deportations and above all heightening military brutality against the intifada have become increasingly credible and a most effective method for dealing with what is seen as Israel's Palestinian problem for the following reasons:

First, international opinion is now focused on the Gulf war with a number of important countries, like the U.S.A., Britain, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait taking an active part in it. Therefore, any action which Israel takes on the occupied territories is likely to be taken with a muted response from the international community.

Second, Israel would argue that the reasons for its harsher actions stem the new security threat against Israel from its Arab population.

Third, any such action would be seen as more justifiable both in the eyes of certain liberal members in Israel who previously criticised the harsh brutality of the army and in the eyes of the international community.

However, now, on the third day of war in the Gulf, with Israel under attack for the second time from Iraqi Scud missiles, Israel seems to be more preoccupied with defending itself than with the immediate future of the Palestinians who have been under constant curfews, repression and suffering.

This is not to say that ideas and plans about transfer, in whatever form they take, have been abandoned. It probably means that, for now at least, they have been temporarily shelved.

Far-sighted diplomacy needed in Mid-East

By Patrick Worsnip Reuter

LONDON — Firm, swift and far-sighted diplomacy will be needed from the United States and its allies if they win the Gulf war to prevent the Middle East sinking back into a morass of hatred and instability, Western analysts say.

Diplomatic and academic experts foresee a two-pronged Western effort to tackle the region's chronic problems, assuming the U.S.-dominated multinational force succeeds in forcing Iraqi troops out of Kuwait.

In the Gulf itself, officials are talking about a new security structure to stabilise a region that has seen two major wars in 11 years, and in the levant a concerted attempt to solve the Israeli-Palestinian dispute once and for all.

But these good intentions could run up against many of the old obstacles, ranging from the intransigence of Israeli hardliners

to Arab nationalism and Islamic fundamentalism further embittered by any defeat of Iraq, analysts predicted.

The incentive for the international community to get a solution will be greater, but I don't see the difficulties being removed," said Rosemary Hollis, Middle East analyst at Britain's Royal United Services Institute.

Most experts said the allies would not allow any significant border changes if they won the war, despite possible Iranian, Syrian or Turkish claims to parts of Iraq.

In principle, leading winners

ought to include Iran — already being courted by some Gulf states which formerly opposed it during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war — and Syria, both long-standing foes of Iraq. Syria has sent troops to join the multinational force while Iran has stayed aloof.

But several analysts said both countries appeared too weak to step into any power vacuum created by a defeat of Iraq. While happy to see the allies smash Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, Tehran and Damascus also fear a subsequent U.S. ascendancy in the region.

For this reason, and to head off any anti-American backlash among Arabs at large, Washington would need to move very carefully in its expected bid to set up a stable new security structure in the Gulf, they said.

The weakness of the West's position has been the clash between its haste to apply U.N. resolutions to drive Iraq out of Kuwait and its lethargy over other resolutions demanding that Israel quit Arab lands it seized in

1967.

Despite their refusal to grant Saddam's demand to link the Kuwait issue with the Arab-Israeli problem, many Western politicians are conceding now that a major push on Palestine must follow a satisfactory outcome to the Gulf war.

"All the U.N. resolutions deserve a new examination," Bernard Kouchner, French secretary of state for humanitarian action, wrote this week. "We must apply our principles as soon as possible over these texts which have remained in suspense."

The question is whether the cataclysm in the Gulf will have brought Israelis and Arabs any closer to the agreement which has eluded them for more than 40 years.

Some analysts say the United States, pressed by its Arab allies against Iraq for political rewards, may be more willing to put pressure on Israel, seeing it less and less as the strategic partner claimed by previous U.S. administrations.

Others argued a mood of anger among rank-and-file Palestinians would frustrate this.

"If people are looking for an alternative Palestinian leadership among reasonable, secularised, westernised Palestinians — they're the ones who are losing control of the streets," Rosemary Hollis said.

"Israel is now a handicap in this (Gulf) operation, not an asset," said Sir James Craig, a former British ambassador to Syria and Saudi Arabia.

But so far, Israel has shown no inclination to accept the international Middle East peace conference most other countries believe is the key to a lasting peace. It says the conference would force it to accept territorial concessions that would damage its security.

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Gulf War

Bonn seeks no direct role in Gulf war

BONN (R) — Germany made clear Friday that it remained determined to avoid direct involvement in the Gulf war.

Government spokesman Dietmar Vogel said the small force of fighter aircraft Bonn has sent to NATO-member Turkey would not be used unless Iraq attacked on that front, obliging all alliance members to come to Ankara's aid.

"It is the government's view that German troops could not get involved in the Gulf war," Mr. Vogel told reporters. "If German troops were to be drawn in, then it will only be as defenders of NATO territory. I do think this will be the case."

German fears that Turkey could prove the flashpoint that drags its forces into battle for the first time since the World War II have increased since Ankara authorised the United States on Thursday to mount air strikes from its territory.

The opposition Social Democrats (SPD) said Bonn not be

obliged to join in the fray if Iraq attacked Turkey in response to U.S. air strike launched from its soil.

"NATO is a defensive alliance, not an alliance for the support of attacks," SPD leader Hans-Joachim Vogel said.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl pledged support for Washington after being sworn in for his fourth term of office Thursday, but he repeated that German troops would not be sent because of a constitutional ban on sending them outside the NATO area.

Opinion polls show most Germans firmly opposed to any military action against Iraq and tens of thousands of people have taken part in daily protest demonstrations.

NATO diplomats in Brussels said many alliance members, notably Britain and the United States, were upset with the perceived lack of support from a country that is so economically powerful.

exceeded the power of the U.S. atomic bomb on Hiroshima, he said.

"This is a country (Iraq) that has been denied medicine and food for the last five months," he said. "Only God knows how many thousands might have fallen dead."

"The future is bleak, extremely bleak for all of us in the Arab World," the King told an estimated 200 journalists from all over the world.

He expressed deep satisfaction at the progress of Jordan's democratic process which he said was a "very interesting period in the life of the country and its people."

He said that freedom and democracy in the country made it possible for Jordan to live peacefully "without the usual measures that governments use to have to adopt under far less dangerous circumstances."

Asked about the Parliament's strong condemnation of the U.S.-led attack on Iraq, the King said: "I believe parliament has the right to express people's anger and frustration and despair over what has been happening in the Arab World."

Polyakov

(Continued from page 1)

by Israel as legitimate self-defence.

Information Minister El Sherif said the president and his ministers discussed at Saturday's meeting "the possible results of the escalation of the last 24 hours." Iraq's missile attacks on Israel.

"Egypt's basic objective remains that Kuwait must be liberated, that Iraqi forces must be withdrawn and that U.N. resolutions must be respected," Sherif said.

Syria, still technically at war with Israel, indicated Saturday that Iraq would fail to break up the anti-Iraqi alliance with missile strikes on Israel.

Official newspapers said Iraq was trying to "reshuffle the cards in the region" and expand the war in the Gulf.

Information minister Mohammad Salman said in a French television interview that Syria would join its Arab neighbour in fighting Israel only if Israel attacked Iraq first.

Diplomats in Damascus said Syria would not enter a battle

"They've had to be prodded throughout this crisis to provide money and help and a lot of people are rather tired of it," said one.

Others said Bonn had been reluctant to send 18 Alpha jets to Turkey as part of a NATO contingent of 42 planes and had agreed only after deciding it had no choice as an alliance member.

Hans Binnendijk of the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies said there was definite unhappiness within allied ranks about Bonn's apparent reluctance to get involved.

"I think the Turkish question should help focus German minds a bit," he said. "When the crisis is over, the question will be how it changes relationships among the allies and where the Germans will be. Their attitude could cause a 'hangover'."

He noted that the U.S.-British "special relationship," apparently dropped last year by President

against Israel if it was excluded from decisions on the preparation and timing of such a war.

"If Israel attacked Jordan and it was the first to launch the attack, or if it attacked Iraq in the same way, Syria would stand with any Arab country subjected to aggression," Mr. Salman told French Television.

Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharara has said Syria would side with any Arab country including Iraq if it was attacked by Israel. He said Damascus would not accept Israeli intervention in the Gulf conflict.

In Algiers, the Syrian ambassador said Friday his country would side with Baghdad if Israel attacked Iraq.

Amassador Abdil Hamid Edahak told Algerian television: "We will be on Iraq's side. We will not allow Israeli planes to use our air space for attacks on Iraq."

Asked about the Parliament's strong condemnation of the U.S.-led attack on Iraq, the King said: "I believe parliament has the right to express people's anger and frustration and despair over what has been happening in the Arab World."

Long war

(Continued from page 1)

Large stockpiles of food, ammunition and supplies were built up in Saudi Arabia and other areas of the Gulf during the five-month U.S. buildup, but supplies are used much more quickly in a war situation," said one official.

"This war could end next month," he said. "Or, it could go on longer depending on what kind of punishment the Iraqis are willing to take."

Mr. Cheney himself cautioned reporters after the initial United States and allied aircraft attacks against Iraqi forces that the war could go on for a "considerable time."

The Post said each battery has 16 launchers.

U.S. officials say the Patriot is fired from a mobile launcher.

Each missile is five metres in length and weighs more than a ton.

The spokesman refused to say how many American experts accompanied the weapons systems.

Israel Radio's military correspondent said the Patriot batteries "will significantly enhance missile interception capability."

Mordechai Hod, who was commander of the Israeli air force during the 1967 war, told Israel Radio that it was difficult to say how effective the Patriot might be against missiles.

"If the system is placed to protect a specific geographic area... they have good chances of downing a few missiles," he said.

He pointed out that the key is early detection and added: "You have a matter of seconds to react."

administration official said Israel had told the United States it would not retaliate for the two

war in the Gulf.

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Edberg, Lendl and Wilander advance in Australian Open

MELBOURNE (Agencies) — Stefan Edberg, Ivan Lendl and Mats Wilander, who have won the last seven Australian Open men's titles, all reached the fourth round Saturday on a day of burning sun and night of blazing temper.

Edberg, celebrating his 25th birthday, capped the day of champions with a 7-6, 7-5, 6-2 victory over Australia's Pat Cash, who was warned for an audible of pity and argued repeatedly with umpire Rudi Berger.

Cash, the 1987 Wimbledon champion who is now ranked 8th after a string of injuries, also was warned for wasting time when he changed one of his sweatsoaked checkered-flag headbands between games.

He never was in danger of default, a three-step process that got John McEnroe thrown out of the tournament just one year ago. That was the only default for misconduct in Australian Open history.

Wilander, the champion in 1983, 1984 and 1988 but now ranked 17th in the world, pulled off one of the day's biggest upsets, eliminating seventh-seeded Brad Gilbert 7-6, 6-4.

Lendl, the titlist the two years and seeded third this time, came back from a set down to beat Sweden's Magnus Gustafsson 4-6, 6-2, 6-3, 6-2. It was the toughest contest so far for Lendl, who came into the tournament with stomach-muscle problems.

"In the first set, I had no confidence in my body," he said. "Once I figured it out, it was OK."

Monica Seles, the women's second seed, had some trouble with little-known Karin Kschwendt before breaking away from world's 118th-ranked player 6-3, 6-1.

And third-seeded Mary Joe Fernandez beat Naoko Sawamatsu of Japan 6-1, 6-1, to reach the fourth round, where she will face No. 16 Sabine Appelmans.

Fernandez won in a match marked by long rallies of backhands and moonballs, but filled with errors by Sawamatsu, the 30th-ranked player in the world.

Edberg had to come from far behind to take both of the first two sets, which were filled with winners and great exchanges at the net. Cheered on by his Australian fans in a jam-packed center court, Cash won the opening three games before Edberg won four in a row and saved a set point in the 12th game on a forehand just long.

He came back from 2-4 in the tiebreak, winning on his second set point, a service winner.

Cash led 4-1 in the second set, breaking for the margin on three consecutive winners. But Edberg won four in a row for a 5-4 lead, and in the last game of that run came the explosion.

Edberg had just broken for 4-4 on a backhand pass and two Cash errors. Because it was an even-numbered game there was no changeover, and Cash tried

to get to the bench and change headbands quickly. Berger, however, slapped him with a warning for time-wasting.

When cash opened the ninth game with a netted volley, he walked back to the baseline and uttered an audible Berger heard it and announced "code violation, audible obscenity, Mr. Cash."

Cash argued but to no avail, then wasted a break point as Edberg held for 5-4 on a netted backhand service return.

Edberg did not allow another break point. He broke for the second set when Cash sent a reaching backhand volley long — the end of another great point — and broke for a 4-2 lead in the third on a long backhand volley.

He broke again for the match when Cash netted a forehand volley.

Edberg, the Australian Open champ in 1985 and 1987, next plays 16th-seeded American Jim Courier, who beat Brazil's Jaime Oncins 6-3, 6-1, 6-1.

After five days of cloudy, downright chilly weather, the skies over Melbourne were brilliant blue and the Aussie sun beamed down hot and bright, with courtside temperatures nearing 90 degrees Fahrenheit (30 degrees Celsius). It was a day of tennis sunstroke for some of the top names, most notably Gilbert, the top-ranked U.S. male in the tournament, and fifth-seeded Goran Ivanisevic of Yugoslavia.

Ivanisevic, the 19-year-old who reached the quarterfinals here two years ago and the semis at Wimbledon last summer, was eliminated in straight sets by another Yugoslav, Goran Prpic, 6-3, 6-4, 6-3.

Also going out were women's ninth seeded Helena Sukova, beaten by Catherine Tanvier of France 4-6, 6-1, 6-1, and No. 14 Rosalyn Fairbank-Nideffer of the United States, a 6-2, 6-3 loser to the youngest of the tennis-playing Maleeva sisters, Magdelena.

Wilander and Gilbert both had five-set victories in the second round and the heat on centre court stretched them both. But after a first set, so even that neither player got more than two points on the other's serve, ended in an 8-6 tiebreak for Wilander, the curly-haired Swede took charge.

He saved a break point and held for a 2-1 lead, then took the next four games with a streak of backhand winners and Gilbert mistakes.

Gilbert appeared to be bothered by his forehand error on the final point of the tiebreak, telling himself at one point in the third game of the second set, "I gave it away." He slammed his racket into the net after missing one second-set volley and kept muttering that he was playing "brainless" tennis.

He also was hit with a warning for slow play, and Wilander thought the first-set loss and the heat took their toll.

Arsenal takes over at top as Liverpool held to draw

LONDON (R) — A second half strike by Paul Merson sent undefeated Arsenal top of the English Soccer League Saturday as champions Liverpool were held to a 1-1 draw at home to Wimbledon.

Merson's 47th minute goal proved the winner against Everton at Highbury and was all the Londoners needed to go a point clear after Liverpool let in a late

goal.

The 1-0 win was Arsenal's 23rd consecutive league game without defeat this season.

Arsenal, with two points deducted earlier in the season, now have 51 points and Liverpool, with a game in hand, are on 50.

Crystal Palace stay third on 45 despite losing 3-1 at home to Norwich.

Andries retains WBC title

ADELAIDE (AP) — American-based Briton Dennis Andries retained his World Boxing Council (WBC) light heavyweight title Saturday with a unanimous 12-round decision over Australian challenger Guy Waters.

The win before more than 8,000 at the memorial drive ten-

nis centre improved Andries' record to 39-8-6, while Waters fell to 13-1-2.

The fight finished with a flurry

when Waters, behind on points, had to sling it out with the champion in a last-minute attempt for a knockout. The judges scored the fight 115-114, 117-113, and 116-112 in favour of Andries.

Ben Johnson loses again

LOS ANGELES (R) — Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson's comeback suffered another setback Friday when he came in second in the 50 metres for an indoor track meet in Los Angeles.

Johnson, who drew loud boos from the crowd of 12,000 when he was introduced, came in a step behind American Andre Cason at an indoor track meet.

Johnson finished second at a track meet last Friday in Hamilton, Ontario, in his first competitive run since he was banned two years ago for using steroids.

The 29-year-old Canadian, known for his explosive starts, was slow out of the blocks, while Cason leapt out in front.

Cason clocked 5.69 seconds, while Johnson was second at 5.74 seconds.

Johnson blamed the narrow lanes for his slow start.

Despite the back-to-back losses, Johnson was confident he would regain his old form soon.

"I think you'll see the real Ben Johnson very soon. Right now I'm just trying to focus on getting back in shape," Johnson said.

The Canadian was stripped of his Olympic 100 metres gold medal and banned for two years after testing positive for steroids at the Seoul Olympics.

In the 50 metre hurdles, American Tony Dees took the lead at the first hurdle to win in 6.43 seconds, ahead of Jamaica's Andrew Parker who clocked 6.57.

Spanish officials reduce Stoichkov's suspension

MADRID, Spain (AP) — FC Barcelona's Hristo Stoichkov had his league record six-month suspension reduced by four months Thursday, allowing the Bulgarian striker to return to action on Feb. 27.

The Spanish Soccer Federation's Committee on Sports Discipline nullified a Dec. 20 appeals committee ruling, cutting the suspension to two months and two matches from a six months and two matches.

Stoichkov, whose seven goals were a key to Barcelona's early-season success, was penalised for stamping on referee Ildefonso Utrera's foot after the official ejected him for protesting a call during a Dec. 5 Supercup match

against Real Madrid.

A Madrid judge suspended him for two months and two matches a week later, but the federation's Appeals Committee struck down the sentence.

The appeals committee was responding to angry referees, who demanded a tougher suspension. The only route of appeal left open is through the Spanish courts.

Barcelona will face defending champion Real Madrid Saturday in their first league encounter this season. As the season hits the halfway mark, the Catalan team is leading second-place Atletico Madrid by four points.

Real Madrid is in fifth place, eight points behind Barcelona.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY JANUARY 20, 1991

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

and get a good start by clarifying what you want then after noon you are able to get together with dear friends.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) After thinking out carefully this morning those most able to help you gain public desires, then get out tonight and let prominent persons see you.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) After a slow start this morning you are able to get off to visit and be with close friends and interesting neighbours as well as your own family.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) This is the time for you to make sure that you are the one who does look at the practical angle of conditions about you so think out how it

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Take care that you do replace whatever does not suit you in the morning for the afternoon and evening are just great for you for desires.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Think out that plan that can bring you more of like's goodies by getting rid of tiresome tasks and dreary drudgeries early, then have a romantic time.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) This is your time to actually show your finest traits and to amuse and entertain those you would like to be connected with in the days before you.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You are able to find the right means by which to get a fresh new start towards the ambitions that impel you forward but need to make new acquaintances.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) This is your day and evening to schedule various matters that bring you income or the good will of personal, business persons.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Take some time out to find out just what your partners expect from you and show them you are willing to go along with them in harmonious accord.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You have a great deal of work to do and if you expect to do it well it is necessary that you do get the suggestions and good will of your usual associates.

PIRATES: (February 20 to March 20) This is your time to actually show your finest traits and to amuse and entertain those you would like to be connected with in the days before you.

THE BETTER HALF. By Harris

HARRIS 12-25



JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

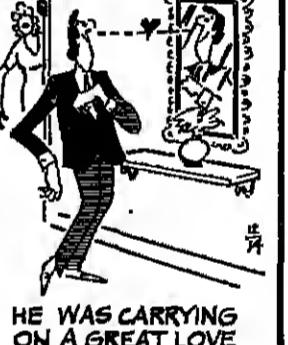
YEEND

LITUB

RUSSED

SESAUR

THAT SCRABBLED WORD GAME by Hank Arnold and Bob Lee



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here:

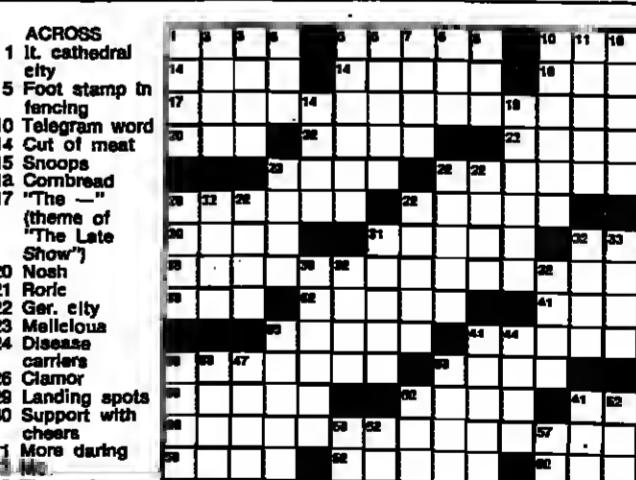
(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumble: BATHE HURRY PLOWED CARNAL

Answer: Where the heavyweight champion was held—AT THE "PUNCH BOWL"

THE Daily Crossword

by Betty Jorgenson



Ouverture des hostilités tous azimuts

La nouvelle guerre du Moyen-Orient

Comme le souhaitait Saddam Hussein, la guerre du Golfe, qui s'est ouverte dans la nuit de mercredi à jeudi, a commencé à prendre la forme, la nuit suivante, d'une nouvelle guerre du Moyen-Orient. On avait pu croire, l'espace de 24 heures, sur la foi d'informations américaines et anglaises, que Saddam Hussein avait été écrasé par la première vague d'assauts aériens de la force multinationale basée en Arabie Saoudite, et mis hors d'état de nuire à qui que ce soit. Mais Saddam Hussein n'a pas tardé à détrouper les esprits en envoyant une dizaine de missiles SCUD sans charge chimique sur Tel Aviv, 11 selon Bagdad) consiste à retenir une riposte israélienne qui ne manquerait pas de disloquer l'alliance arabo-occidentale dans le Golfe et renforcer l'Irak jusqu'ici militairement isolé.

En Jordanie, la riposte irakienne a réveillé l'espoir des citoyens, stupéfaits et désorientés par la nouvelle d'une défaite immédiate et passive de l'homme fort de Bagdad, déclaré par le monde entier comme le détenteur d'une puissance militaire considérable. Une sorte de dépression nerveuse collective s'était emparée de la population à l'annonce de cette nouvelle, difficilement combattue par l'écoute de radio-Bagdad, qui démentait les succès annoncés par la force multinationale. Le gouvernement

jordanien publiait jeudi un communiqué condamnant l'attaque massive de l'Irak par la force multinationale. «La Jordanie, dirigeants, gouvernement et peuple, dénoncent l'agression sauvage qui a eu lieu dans les premières heures de ce jour contre un pays et un peuple arabe musulman qui s'est toujours battu de venir au secours de ses frères arabes», annonçait ce communiqué. Tous ceux qui y ont participé assument devant Dieu et l'histoire leur responsabilité dans la destruction d'une force militaire, scientifique et populaire arabe et d'un peuple arabo-musulman qui est un membre essentiel de cette Nation. La Jordanie, qui respecte les résolutions du Conseil de Sécurité, regrettait qu'une crise similaire dans la région, comportant une occupation et l'exil d'un peuple arabe hors de sa patrie, n'ait pas fait l'objet de tant de résolutions et d'un embargo économique ainsi que d'une menace d'agression. La Jordanie a essayé depuis le déclenchement de la crise du Golfe de parvenir à une solution pacifique de la crise, mais elle s'est toujours heurtée à des parties qui, dès le début, étaient déterminées à opter pour l'action militaire.

La faible présence de journalistes à Bagdad et la tendance de chacun des deux camps à exagérer ses succès rend difficile à l'heure actuelle de dresser un bilan des conséquences des différentes attaques militaires. Il semble sûr en tout cas qu'un Tornado italien envoyé en mission dans la nuit de jeudi à vendredi n'est pas rentré à sa base dans les Emirats Arabes Unis, et les forces alliées ont reconnu jusqu'à présent la perte de deux autres Tornado pilotés par des aviateurs britanniques ainsi que d'un F18 américain. Quarante pilotes ont été portés disparus, dont sept américains, quatre anglais, deux italiens et un koweïtien. Un porte-parole militaire irakien a annoncé de son côté

samedi que les défenses irakiennes avaient abattu 101 appareils de la force multinationale depuis le début des hostilités.

Le département américain de la Défense, quant à lui, avait déclaré vendredi devant le Congrès que la force multinationale avait détruit 11 avions de guerre irakiens en deux jours de bombardements.

En Israël, la première attaque irakienne a fait 12 blessés légers et occasionné des dégâts matériels «substantiels» selon un bilan israélien. D'autre part, une fillette arabe israélienne de trois ans, du village de Taibé (entre Tel Aviv et Haifa) est morte étranglée alors que ses parents la forçaient à revêtir son masque à gaz. La seconde attaque aurait également fait une dizaine de blessés.

L'avenir de la situation dépend donc maintenant du choix que fera Israël de rentrer ou non dans la guerre. Après la seconde attaque, Avi Pazner, porte-parole du Premier Ministre israélien Yitzhak Shamir a déclaré que les représailles étaient inévitables et les Américains semblaient ne plus faire pression que pour un caractère limité de ces représailles.

Quoi qu'il en soit, cette riposte prendra vraisemblablement la forme d'un raid aérien sur l'Irak, qui ne peut passer que par le royaume hachémite pour atteindre sa cible. La Jordanie a déjà fait savoir qu'elle ne tolérerait pas la violation de son espace aérien par des avions israéliens. Cela signifie donc que la guerre du Golfe est en train de changer de nature. D'expédition punitive contre l'Irak sous l'égide des Nations Unies pour obtenir la libération du Koweït, elle est en train de devenir la nouvelle et peut-être la plus grave guerre du Moyen-Orient, opposant une fois de plus, avec des alliances diverses, les Arabes aux Israéliens.

Jean-Marc Bordes

Réfugiés. La Jordanie a décidé vendredi d'ouvrir sa frontière à toutes les personnes fuyant l'Irak et le Koweït, a annoncé le président du Haut comité jordanien des Réfugiés, Salam Hammoud, qui estime que 750.000 personnes pourraient affluer dans le royaume. L'organisation humanitaire Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF France) avait indiqué lundi que face au risque de conflit dans le Golfe, elle participerait au plan d'assistance élaboré par les Nations Unies pour prendre en charge les réfugiés qui quitteraient les zones de combat. L'association humanitaire française précise qu'elle a déjà mis en place dans la Jordanie des équipes et du matériel nécessaire à l'accueil de 40.000 personnes.



Sang contre pétrole

George Bush a donc déclenché sa guerre offensive contre les peuples arabes et contre ceux du Tiers-Monde.

«Un nouveau monde sera établi», a-t-il précisé dans son discours de guerre, avant d'ajouter «nous voulons détruire le potentiel militaire irakien». La libération du Koweït ou la protection de l'Arabie Saoudite, objectifs officiellement chers aux yeux de M. Bush et ses amis, passent donc au second plan.

Le président américain a décidé de commencer la guerre, mais il n'est pas sûr qu'il sera de son ressort d'y mettre fin. Cette région du monde est habitée par des peuples, des hommes, des femmes, des jeunes et des enfants qui rêvent depuis très très longtemps de vivre en paix et de profiter délicieusement des richesses de leurs pays — comme d'ailleurs tous les peuples du monde.

Les impérialistes — anciens et nouveaux — en ont décidé autrement, car le Proche-Orient est pour eux synonyme de pétrole. Ils ont créé toutes sortes de divisions dans cette région, y ont implanté un Etat raciste (Israël) et des régimes fantoches, particulièrement dans le Golfe. Au fil des années, les Occidentaux ont cru que les peuples de la région allaient avancer toutes ces machinations, sous prétextes d'un statu quo légitime. Résultats: quatre grandes guerres, et voici la cinquième qui commence, sans oublier les centaines de petites ou moyennes batailles au cours des quarante dernières années. Malheureusement, l'histoire récente de cette région n'est qu'une histoire de guerres.

Chaque fois que les peuples arabes ont tenté de reconstruire leur vie sur des bases de liberté, de justice et de dignité, les impérialistes, les sionistes et leurs valets arabes étaient là pour faire avorter ces tentatives, celle du président défunt Gamal Abdel Nasser, entre autres.

Certes, on peut écraser le réveil des peuples deux, trois ou cinq fois, mais jamais on ne pourra écraser sa volonté définitivement.

Il est difficile de parler de cette guerre catastrophique alors qu'elle fait encore rage. Mais il semble qu'il est beaucoup plus facile, pour M. Bush, de déclencher une guerre terrible que de faire un lien entre la crise du Golfe et la question palestinienne.

La France a fait un sérieux effort quelques heures avant le début des hostilités. Son initiative a été sabotée par les dirigeants américains. Il n'est pas trop tard pour relancer les efforts diplomatiques, car la guerre risque de se prolonger plus longtemps que prévu.

La colère et la détermination des peuples arabes sont grandes. Il devient de plus en plus évident qu'ils n'ont que leurs chaînes à perdre.

La paix, que ce soit en Palestine ou dans le Golfe, n'est pas uniquement l'objectif des Arabes. Elle est aussi celui des peuples américains, britanniques et autres, dont de grands secteurs ont déjà manifesté contre la guerre avant même son déclenchement la semaine dernière.

Oui, «la guerre quelle connerie!», nous le disons avec le poète français Jacques Prévert. Mais que nous proposons l'Occident comme alternative? «La paix des esclaves» dira-t-on. N'y a-t-il vraiment pas d'autre choix?

Encore une fois, nous, peuples arabes, nous le crions au milieu du feu et du sang: nous voulons la paix et la justice, et nous précisons: la justice avant même la paix. Nous l'avons répété mille fois, nous le répétons et nous le répéterons toujours. Peut-être avons-nous commis des erreurs pour mener notre combat, mais cela ne nous obligera jamais à capituler devant qui que ce soit.

Les peuples arabes et européens ont beaucoup d'intérêts communs. Nous avons contribué à la construction de la civilisation humaine à des époques différentes. L'Europe peut encore et toujours jouer un rôle positif non seulement en faveur d'elle-même ou en faveur du monde arabe, mais en faveur du nouveau monde qui se dessine en cette fin de siècle.

Rappeler ces vérités en ce moment de déraison, est-ce un rêve? Je ne le crois pas.

LA SEMAINE...

de Suleiman Sweiss

Sang contre pétrole

George Bush a donc déclenché sa guerre offensive contre les peuples arabes et contre ceux du Tiers-Monde.

«Un nouveau monde sera établi», a-t-il précisé dans son discours de guerre, avant d'ajouter «nous voulons détruire le potentiel militaire irakien». La libération du Koweït ou la protection de l'Arabie Saoudite, objectifs officiellement chers aux yeux de M. Bush et ses amis, passent donc au second plan.

Le président américain a décidé de commencer la guerre, mais il n'est pas sûr qu'il sera de son ressort d'y mettre fin. Cette région du monde est habitée par des peuples, des hommes, des femmes, des jeunes et des enfants qui rêvent depuis très très longtemps de vivre en paix et de profiter délicieusement des richesses de leurs pays — comme d'ailleurs tous les peuples du monde.

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l'effort des Occidentaux désormais, et tout particulièrement après la deuxième vague de lancement de missiles irakiens sur Israël dans la nuit de vendredi à samedi (3 SCUD sans charge chimique selon Tel Aviv; 11 selon Bagdad) consiste à retenir une riposte israélienne qui ne manquerait pas de disloquer l'alliance arabo-occidentale dans le Golfe et renforcer l'Irak jusqu'ici militairement isolé.

En Jordanie, la riposte irakienne a réveillé l'espoir des citoyens, stupéfaits et désorientés par la nouvelle d'une défaite immédiate et passive de l'homme fort de Bagdad, déclaré par le monde entier comme le détenteur d'une puissance militaire considérable. Une sorte de dépression nerveuse collective s'est emparée de la population à l'annonce de cette nouvelle, difficilement combattue par l'écoute de radio-Bagdad, qui démentait les succès annoncés par la force multinationale.

Le gouvernement

Idée fausse

«La Terre est une femme et les guerres sont ses menstrues», disait Staline. Cette conception qui fait de la guerre un phénomène incontrôlable, cyclique et, finalement, nécessaire à la vie, trouve encore, malheureusement, ses défenseurs aujourd'hui. Après deux siècles, la vieille conception de Hegel qui attribue un rôle positif à la guerre n'a pas disparu.

Les forces qui gouvernent ce monde, supposées sages et sennées, ne connaissent toujours pas la pitié et la valeur des vies humaines. Pour elles, la guerre est un moyen de sortir des crises économiques et sociales dont le monde souffre aujourd'hui. Renouveler l'âme de l'humanité, assainir une situation locale ou globale, c'est encore pour cela qu'on dit faire la guerre aujourd'hui.

Petite ou grande, la guerre est le mal nécessaire qui permettra ensuite de s'asseoir à Genève pour tenter — comme le proposait le président François Mitterrand sans guerre — de négocier des accords de paix et de stabilité dans la région, comme on l'a fait en Europe après la seconde guerre mondiale.

Aujourd'hui encore, la force affichée ou secrète (comptes et agences diverses) prime sur la raison. L'homme normal n'a pas sa place et n'est fait que pour assister, recevoir et subir ce qu'on a choisi pour lui à l'heure ou sonne le glas.

Il serait tant que l'homme apprenne à faire ses révoltes en évitant les bains de sang et en prenant en compte l'unité de ce monde, la totalité de l'univers. Un jour ou l'autre l'Humanité sera enfin sage et comprendra — si l'il n'est pas trop tard — que le monde est une grande patrie et que l'Humanité est une grande nation.

C'est par l'éducation et non par la guerre que le destin de l'Humanité se rapprochera des idéaux de Liberté et d'Égalité. C'est par la solidarité que l'Humanité atteindra la justice; ce n'est pas par la guerre qu'on atteint la Fraternité.

Se battre est un comportement d'enfant auquel l'Humanité, vieille pourtant de quelques millénaires, n'échappe toujours pas. C'est la méchanceté, le fanatisme et l'égoïsme qu'il faut combattre... sans s'abaisser au niveau de son ennemi.

L'endettement, le chômage, la criminalité, la drogue sont des problèmes qu'on ne résoudra définitivement que par la planification et la solidarité. Nous ne sommes plus au temps de Napoléon ou Hegel, la souffrance n'est plus nécessaire à la création car l'Homme a déjà presque tout créé. Quand une guerre menace l'Humanité tout entière, quelques individus n'ont pas le droit de la faire.

Hegel lui-même nie son propre principe en disant que la philosophie n'est valable que pour l'époque à laquelle elle est formulée. Les forces qui gouvernent le monde sont aveuglées par leur force et leur égoïsme. Dès lors qu'elles croient ne pas avoir à payer le prix de la destruction, rien ne parvient à les empêcher de faire la guerre. On sait déjà que, perversement, c'est l'augmentation des prix du pétrole et d'autres matières brutes qui financeront cette guerre. Les pauvres de l'Humanité payeront le prix de cette guerre comme celui de toutes les précédentes... A moins que la raison ne vainque!

Faycal Alzareiqat

Stockage. Le gouvernement français a interdit mercredi la vente en bidons des carburants, pour enrayer une fièvre de stockage qui s'est emparée des particuliers depuis quelques jours, par crainte de l'imminence d'un conflit dans le Golfe. «Depuis août déjà, les gens se sont mis à stocker et cela s'est accéléré ces derniers jours», a confirmé le patron d'un réseau de distribution, Edouard Leclerc, qui, en cinq mois, a vendu autant de jerricans qu'en trois ans. Enfin, le gouvernement avait fait appel à l'esprit civique et au sens des responsabilités des compagnies pétrolières, au cours d'une réunion avec les présidents de ces sociétés, afin d'éviter une flambée des prix de l'essence en cas de guerre.

De la crise à la guerre

SEPTEMBRE

9: Unité au sommet Bush-Gorbachev à Helsinki sur la crise du Golfe.

10: L'Irak et l'Iran annoncent la reprise de leurs relations diplomatiques.

14: Violation par des soldats irakiens de quatre résidences diplomatiques occidentales à Koweït. Trois Français sont enlevés. Le 15, Paris porte son dispositif militaire dans le Golfe à 13.000 hommes.

23: A l'ONU, le président français François Mitterrand présente un plan pour la solution de l'ensemble des problèmes du Proche-Orient.

25: Le Conseil de Sécurité étend l'embargo à l'espace aérien.

OCTOBRE

11: Le dernier groupe de femmes et d'enfants occidentaux quitte Bagdad.

17: Plus de 200.000 soldats américains sont déployés dans le Golfe.

29: Le président Mikhail Gorbachev estime inacceptable une solution militaire et avance l'idée d'une conférence inter-arabe. Libération des derniers otages français. Paris souligne qu'il s'agit d'une décision unilatérale de l'Irak.

NOVEMBRE

8: George Bush annonce l'envoi de 200.000 hommes en renfort.

16: George Bush se rend en Europe et au Proche

Drogue en jordanie

La lutte contre les trafiquants

Faible pays de consommation (la population n'est touchée que dans une proportion de 3), la Jordanie est en revanche affectée par le transit sur son territoire de stupéfiants, produits et consommés aux abords de ses frontières. Pour lutter contre ce trafic, la Jordanie a mis en place en 1973 un organisme chargé de lutter contre la drogue et contre la fraude. Elle a aussi renforcé la sévérité de ses lois en matière de stupéfiants tout en offrant aux consommateurs le choix de se faire soigner plutôt que d'être sanctionnés par la justice. Ce nouveau combat contre la drogue en Jordanie a reçu le soutien d'un certain nombre de pays étrangers, parmi lesquels l'Allemagne et la France.

Père de quatre enfants, âgé de 35 ans, artisan et drogué à l'opium, M. X suit actuellement une cure de désintoxication à l'hôpital psychiatrique de Fuheis, dans le service de la toxicomanie. Cet hôpital se trouve à 15 km à l'ouest de la capitale jordanienne. L'usage répété de la drogue a conduit M. X à l'accoutumance. Il confie qu'il a commencé à goûter à l'opium à l'âge de 32 ans, alors qu'il était en voyage au Liban. Ses amis le poussent alors à cette consommation particulière en lui assurant que l'opium stimule fortement les activités sexuelles. De son côté, il estimait alors que la drogue «pourrait éventuellement l'aider à trouver la sévérité et un certain équilibre psychique».

Ce n'est que trop tard qu'il comprit que l'abus des drogues (opium, hashish, héroïne, morphine), quelles que soient les façons de les prendre (ingestion ou injection) conduit fatallement à la déchéance physique et intellectuelle. «C'est pourquoi, dit-il, j'ai voulu me faire soigner à tout prix. Mais les événements s'y étaient mal. Lors d'un second séjour au Liban, il rapporte 200 g d'opium pour ne pas être en manque pendant un mois ou deux. Et peu à peu le voyage devient une habitude irrésistible. Ces voyages lui coûtent cher en termes de fatigue, de frais de transport, et aboutit finalement à l'endettement et à la crise conjugale, sa femme découvrant tout, un jour, par hasard. «Comme je ne pouvais plus aller au Liban pour me procurer de l'opium, raconte-t-il, j'ai commencé à chercher des personnes sur Amman capables de me dépanner. Et ce ne fut pas si difficile. La recherche n'a duré que quelques jours. J'ai trouvé quelqu'un qui vendait le grammme d'opium à 10 dinars. Et j'ai aussi commencé à passer des soirées avec des amis, à fumer du hash, à mâcher de l'opium, à s'injecter de l'héroïne, chacun selon ses goûts qui devenaient peu à peu des besoins. A cette époque, j'étais vivant et je gagnais bien ma vie. Aujourd'hui, je suis complètement ruiné. J'ai 32 000 dinars de dettes, tout mon entourage me rejette et me considère comme un marginal.»

Ayant atteint ce stade, il raconte qu'il se sentait perdu, sans valeur. Il a donc dû commencer à se faire soigner pour de bon. Sa belle-sœur fréquentait une femme docteur qui promit de l'aider. Il lui rendit visite et elle appela l'hôpital spécialisé de Fuheis pour qu'il y suive un traitement. «Sur le coup, se souvient M. X, j'ai cru qu'elle m'envoyait chez les fous. J'ai su que ce n'était pas ma place et que je n'irais pas. Mais cette femme a su me convaincre et me voici dans la section de la toxicomanie depuis trois semaines. Les premiers trois jours, j'ai voulu m'évader, car il faisait froid, j'avais froid, je n'aimais pas leur cuisine. Puis l'équipe médicale a commencé le traitement...»

A l'extérieur je crois que les gens sont partagés. Pour certains je suis malade et je mérite un traitement; pour d'autres je suis un bon à rien, un fum irrécupérable.

La loi encourage les personnes touchées à se déclarer d'elles-mêmes afin d'être soignées. Je me sens à la fois coupable et déçue. J'ai envie de refaire ma vie pour de bon: la toxicomanie ne mène qu'à la maladie et à des relations sociales instables. Si je devais donner un conseil aux jeunes aujourd'hui, je leur dirais surtout: ne touchez jamais à tous ces poisons.»

Le Dr Ehsan Rafat est président de l'hôpital psychiatrique de Fuheis. Il explique que beaucoup de drogués se font soigner dans son hôpital pour échapper à la justice. La loi jordanienne autorise en effet les toxicomanes à demander à être soignés avant de purger les peines prononcées par les tribunaux.

Le Dr Bahjat Abdallah, vice-président de l'hôpital, explique que la propagation de la drogue dépend de deux facteurs principaux qui sont l'offre sur le marché, d'une part, et la personnalité des gens qui peuvent les rendre demandeurs de ce genre de produits. Selon lui, les malades présentés dans le service de son hôpital ne représentent que 5% des intoxiqués jordaniens, les 95% restant étant introuvable ou ayant refusé de se faire soigner.

Sur les conseils de Sa Majesté le roi Hussein, un organisme contre la drogue et la fraude a été fondé en Jordanie en 1973. L'objectif essentiel de cet organisme est de poursuivre le marché de la drogue dans le royaume, et ses connexions avec l'étranger, mais aussi d'arrêter les fraudeurs et les faux-monnayeurs ainsi que les fabricants de faux passeports.

Dans quel sens travaille cet organisme dans le domaine des stupéfiants? Izedine Zaza, haut responsable de cette institution, explique qu'elle a été créée dans le but d'empêcher la culture et la vente de toutes les sortes de drogues dans le royaume et de pourchasser les trafiquants, en collaboration avec les douanes et les services de police. Le service anti-drogue a ainsi mis la main sur un certain nombre de réseaux clandestins. Ils surveillent sévèrement les lieux de transit et de stockage des drogues.

Il faut noter d'ailleurs que la Jordanie est beaucoup plus un pays de transit qu'un lieu de consommation des stupéfiants. Les drogues viennent des pays producteurs (Liban, Turquie, principalement) et ne font la

pluspart du temps que transiter par le royaume pour être consommées dans les pays du Golfe (l'Arabie Saoudite notamment) et en Egypte.

La Jordanie fait un effort considérable pour limiter l'offre de drogue sur le marché jordanien et pour dissuader la demande. Les organismes concernés n'hésitent pas à accueillir les drogués pour les soumettre à un traitement médical et psychique.

En 1988, la Jordanie a adopté une nouvelle loi sur «les drogues et ses effets mentaux», la plus récente dans ce domaine dans le royaume. Cette loi aggrave les peines pour les drogués et les trafiquants. La peine de mort est prévue pour toute personne fréquentant régulièrement les milieux de ventes de drogue, les membres de réseaux internationaux et ceux qui utilisent des mineurs pour augmenter leurs profits. Tous les profits sont d'ailleurs confisqués dès lors qu'il proviennent de la vente de drogue.

La loi encourage les personnes touchées à se déclarer d'elles-mêmes afin d'être soignées. Dans ce cas, elles ne sont ni arrêtées, ni jugées. Les personnes qui achètent, vendent ou fabriquent des stupéfiants sont passibles d'une peine minimale de trois mois de prison et d'une amende de 3 000 dinars au moins.

La Jordanie consacre en tout 5 millions de dinars à la lutte contre le trafic de drogue, mais le fait que 70% du territoire soit constitué de désert ne facilite pas la surveillance. Les plus grosses quantités transitent souvent dans les réservoirs d'essence des camions qui traversent le pays, mais une multitude de petites quantités passent les frontières à dos d'ânes ou entre les mains de passeurs professionnels, habitués aux routes clandées du désert.



Les petites quantités transitent entre les mains de passeurs, habitués aux routes secrètes du désert.

mondiales comme un pays grand consommateur de drogue. La proportion de drogués ne dépasse pas les 10%.

Les personnes qui offrent de la drogue ou aident à s'en procurer sont passibles de peines de 10 ans de prison minimum et doivent payer une amende allant de 10 000 à 15 000 dinars. Cette peine est également appliquée aux personnes autorisées à détenir des drogues pour raisons médicales et qui les utilisent à d'autres fins.

Les médecins et les pharmaciens qui donnent ou délivrent une ordonnance médicale contenant des matières anesthésiantes pour des motifs non strictement médicaux sont condamnés à deux ans de prison au moins et à une amende de 5 000 dinars dans le meilleur des cas.

Le tribunal de grande instance a le droit d'appliquer les mesures qui lui paraissent les plus adéquates au cas qui leur est soumis: ou bien placer le toxicomane en prison ou bien le confier au service de toxicomanie de l'hôpital psychiatrique. Tout dépend finalement de l'avise de l'assistance sociale et du psychiatre.

Durant la phase de traitement, l'identité des personnes soignées est maintenue dans le plus grand secret sous peine d'un an de prison et d'une amende de 500 dinars au moins pour les membres du personnel de l'hôpital qui auraient trahi ce secret.

L'organisme de lutte contre la drogue que préside M. Izedine Zaza, considère la prévention comme un problème national, touchant à la sécurité du pays.

Les traditions, la religion et les valeurs sociales sont largement invoquées pour limiter la propagation de la drogue. Les établissements culturels et éducatifs jouent aussi un rôle déterminant dans ce domaine.

La Jordanie, n'est pas considérée au vu des statistiques

les services anti-drogue enrichissent actuellement leur équipement (laboratoires, chiens dressés) et leur formation, grâce à l'aide étrangère. L'Allemagne est le premier soutien financier des services anti-drogue jordanien et la France a versé 15 millions de francs d'aide à ces services en 1990. Il y a quelques semaines, une équipe d'experts français a rendu visite aux jordaniens pour jeter les bases d'une coopération étroite entre les deux pays dans ce domaine qui devrait prendre principalement la forme de stages de formation en France.

Osama Al-Qudah

Les chiffres de la drogue en Jordanie

L'augmentation des prix et celle des saisies des différentes drogues sur le marché jordanien montrent que le trafic tend actuellement à se développer.

PRIX: Aujourd'hui, le kilo de Hashish se vend à 500 dinars et celui d'héroïne à 30 000 dinars. Le prix du Hashish est multiplié par dix entre son entrée en Jordanie et son exportation vers d'autres pays.

SAISIES: La plus grosse saisie d'héroïne en Jordanie (19 kg, en provenance du Liban) date de 1990. La plus grosse saisie de Hashish (1 500 kg à Aqaba) date de 1986. La plus grosse saisie d'opium (26 kg) date de 1987. Globalement, 5 670 kg de Hashish ont été saisis en 1990 contre 445 kg en 1980.

ARRESTATIONS: De 120 arrestations pour trafic ou consommation de stupéfiants en Jordanie en 1980, on est passé à 342 arrestations en 1990 dont un tiers concernent des étrangers de passage dans le royaume. Il est à noter d'ailleurs que la plupart des consommateurs de drogue en Jordanie sont des étrangers ou des Jordaniens ayant séjourné à l'étranger.

PROCES: De 35 procès pour trafic ou consommation de stupéfiants en Jordanie en 1980, on est passé à 135 procès en 1990.



Les plus grosses quantités de drogue transitent dans les réservoirs d'essence des camions.

A L'AFFICHE

TELEVISION

Documents

L'eau des autres

«L'eau: c'est la vie» est le thème d'une exposition sur un sujet qui nous concerne tous, plus que jamais cette année en Jordanie, pays aride, comme le reste du Proche-Orient, par la sécheresse.

Ce projet — présenté au Centre Culturel Français jusqu'à la fin du mois — souligne à travers 18 panneaux le rôle que joue le cycle de l'eau dans notre vie quotidienne. Il nous expose aussi quelques concussions sur les problèmes de l'eau, auxquelles sont arrivés les hydrologues travaillant pour les organes du Conseil Economique et Social des Nations Unies. Rappelons qu'en 1980, le Secrétaire Général a baptisé les années quatre-vingts de «décennie internationale de l'eau potable et de l'assainissement». Le double objectif était, à la fin de cette période, l'accès pour tous à l'eau potable et en deuxième lieu de les pourvoir de systèmes d'hygiène suffisants — pour les défendre notamment contre les maladies.

Y sont-ils parvenus? Les savants en doutent. D'après cette exposition de textes et de photos — travail réalisé par la cité des sciences et de l'industrie de La Villette, Paris — un grand nombre de leurs projets ont échoué. Ils avouent qu'ils ont beaucoup à se reprocher, et en premier lieu d'avoir manifesté une foi aveugle dans les miracles de la technologie, sans tenir compte des aspects sociaux, économiques, culturels des conditions régionales auxquelles il aurait fallu les adapter, expliquent-ils.

Informative, l'exposition met en valeur par des textes simples — débarrassés du jargon scientifique — l'importance de l'eau, sa provenance, ses sources, les méthodes pour la purifier, mais aussi les problèmes attachés à sa distribution, son aménagement et ses dangers — conséquences complexes de désastres naturels (éboulements) et d'imprudences (emploi irresponsable de l'eau stagiaire). Quatre-vingt pourcent des maladies, nous explique ce documentaire, doivent être attribuées à l'utilisation d'eaux crues et décomposées.

D'autre part, il manque des photos expressives, de qualité surprise, capables d'accrocher l'œil en éveillant la curiosité du spectateur et l'attirant vers les panneaux. La plupart sont des photos factuelles (acs, puits, puits, terres craquelées) sans la qualité engageante qu'un bon photographe peut livrer. Une exception: celle d'Alain Pinoges et sa photo d'une petite Afrique se lavant sous une pompe à main avec une joie éclatante. Le panneau intitulé Nivesa d'eau, niveau de vie, révèle des faits choquants. Il nous annonce qu'il devrait y avoir assez d'eau pour les cinq milliards d'habitants de la Terre. Pourtant, 1,8 milliard d'êtres humains n'ont pas accès à l'eau potable et plus de 2,4 milliards vivent sans accès à des systèmes sanitaires. Comme avec le texte qui met l'accent sur l'inégalité de la distribution de l'eau dans le monde, la photo de Pinoges témoigne aussi du caractère précieux de l'eau pour ceux qui en sont privés. Remarquons que, par contraste avec un Nord-Américain qui consomme 200 litres d'eau par jour et un Européen 150 litres, l'Africain n'a accès qu'à 15 litres. Quand on note que l'individu moyen a besoin de 40 litres par jour, la photo de la petite africaine se baignant renforce notre conscience du caractère primordial de l'eau.

On devrait se rappeler un peu du fait que les savants des Nations Unies ont conclu qu'en négligeant l'aspect régional de leurs projets, ils se sont heurtés à des difficultés de réalisation.

Ironiquement, les organisateurs de cette exposition ont commis la même erreur. Ils n'ont pas su profiter des concussions des hydrologues pour nous présenter ces faits vitaux d'une manière assez convaincante pour nous obliger à faire attention à ces documents.

Le développement d'une thématique régionale aurait provoqué un intérêt plus vif. La grande faiblesse de l'exposition est qu'elle ne traite pas de la Jordanie, ni même du Moyen-Orient. On aurait souhaité une exposition plus proche du pays ou de la région, adaptant le sujet aux réalités familiaires. Or, la tendance est de présenter le problème de l'eau dans un contexte généralisé, universel, alors que la majorité des panneaux traité en fait du Tiers-Monde. Sans cette précision, ces informations vitales sont difficiles à retenir. L'éclairage généralisé n'aide pas à la concentration: au contraire, il ne fait qu'apaiser l'ambiance et rendre l'exposition un peu assommante.

Sami Kamal

DIVERS

Documentaire. Le CCF propose cette semaine un documentaire vidéo sur «La Terre, planète fragile», dans le cadre d'un cycle de reportages scientifiques sur la géographie terrestre. Centre Culturel Français, le samedi 26 janvier à 16h ou sur demande.

EXPOSITIONS

Eau. Exposition intitulée «L'eau c'est la vie» réalisée par la cité des sciences et de l'industrie de La Villette, près de Paris. L'eau est notre capital vie: sa masse totale sur Terre ne varie pas et pourtant nous sommes plus de cinq milliards à la partager, de façon très inégalée il est vrai. Cette exposition abondamment illustrée nous amènera à réfléchir aux grandes questions que l'Homme se pose face à ce bien si précieux, source de vie et enjeu de survie. Voir FOCUS. Centre Culturel Français, jusqu'à la fin du mois.

CINEMA

Bird. Film de Clint Eastwood, sorti en 1988, racontant la vie du grand musicien de Jazz, Charlie Parker. Le film montre comment un large éventail de personnalités gravitent autour de Jazz (danseurs et musiciens, propriétaires de clubs et gangsters) ont participé à l'évolution dévorante de ce courant musical. Centre Africain le jeudi 24 à 19h.

La passerelle. Film de Jean-Claude Sautet, avec Pierre Arditi, sorti en 1988. Deux êtres que tout sépare à priori vont pourtant se rencontrer à l'occasion d'un véritable drame. Centre Culturel Français, le lundi 21 à 20h.

Forum des Jeunes Arabes

Association d'intelligences

arabe.

Le Forum participe aux travaux bénévoles et organise stages, réunions et séminaires pour une meilleure compréhension du passé, du présent et une meilleure conduite pour l'avenir.

Au niveau local, le Forum possède des branches dans la plupart des villes et villages jordaniens (Irbid, Mafrag, Ramtha, Salt, Kerak et Aqaba, entre autres). Il a des bureaux dans les Universités afin d'expliquer aux gens les objectifs et les expériences du Forum.

On note que la participation des femmes à cette association est relativement limitée, pour des raisons liées à la culture et aux coutumes sociales, mais les choses changent progressivement.

Le Forum ne reçoit aucune subvention du gouvernement ou d'organisations internationales. Ses ressources financières viennent des frais d'adhésion (3 dinars), des donations, des contributions, des profits des investissements, des revenus des publications et de bien d'autres sources acceptées par le conseil d'administration. Tout cela dans le but de s'assurer indépendance et autonomie. Il travaille cependant avec d'autres associations nationales et internationales en vue d'une coopération positive.

Quant à son attitude à l'égard de la crise du Golfe, et mises à part les conférences sur le sujet qu'il a organisées, le Forum a édité une brochure dans laquelle il exprime son soutien aux mesures prises par le roi Hussein pour trouver une solution pacifique à la crise. Il y est dit que les Arabes sont capables de résoudre leurs problèmes eux-mêmes, la politique des Etats-Unis au Moyen-Orient y est condamnée et il comprend une guerre pressante contre les conséquences négatives d'une guerre dans la région. Le Forum affirme enfin la détermination et la capacité des jeunes Jordaniens à faire face aux dangers qui les menacent, côte à côte et sans hésitation.

Inas Namnani

Economy

Jordanian dinar weathers turbulence in the Gulf

P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Jordanian dinar is holding steady against the sweeping tide of developments in the Gulf and economic analysts do not expect any significant shift in the course in the short-term since the war has not added any negative element to the Kingdom's economy which was already hit by the five-month-old crisis.

The official rate set by the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) remained at the level of 663/667 fils to the American dollar Saturday. In the so-called "parallel (black) market" the greenback was traded in the range of 700 fils to 710 fils — very little change from the rate that prevailed Monday, four days before the American-led multinational forces unleashed war on Iraq.

Dr. Jawad Al Anani and Dr. Fahed Fanek, two of the most prominent Jordanian economic analysts, are unanimous that the dinar's steady course is only natural given the fact that the military conflagration is not brought in any new burden — in pure economic terms — to Jordan.

"Our imports are low, exports are more or less the same and our foreign exchange reserves are relatively healthy," said Dr. Anani, a former minister of trade and industry. "In real terms very little has changed in these areas since the war started," he pointed out.

Dr. Fanek, a noted communist and head of an auditor's firm, pointed out that the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait seriously damaged the Kingdom's economy by depriving it of Arab financial aid, expatriate remittances, trade with both Iraq and Kuwait, and transit charges on cargo bound for Iraq as well as tourism revenue.

Figures released by the Finance Ministry on July 27, five days before the invasion of

Kuwait, indicated an economy taking slow but firm steps towards eventual recovery from the strains imposed by a foreign debt of \$8.3 billion.

"The economy has been absorbing one impact after another in the past five and a half months since the Aug. 2 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait," Dr. Fanek noted. "The blow had already been dealt to Jordan before the first bombs fell on Baghdad Thursday, and in economic terms nothing has changed as far as Jordan is concerned," he said.

Both Dr. Anani and Dr. Fanek referred to Jordan's gross foreign exchange reserves, which has been boosted to around \$700 million with the receipt of part of the international assistance it has been promised as compensation for its adherence to the economic sanctions against Iraq, the Kingdom's main trading partner until the Aug. 2 invasion.

It is estimated that Jordan lost around \$1.1 billion in "visibles" during the year 1990 as a result of the Gulf crisis, and is projected to sustain a loss of \$2.5 million in 1991. These figures are certified as accurate by U.N. agencies and independent sources.

No definite figures are available yet on the amount of cash the Kingdom actually received as part of the \$250 million it has been pledged as compensation by Japan, Germany, Canada, France, Italy, and the Netherlands. The pledges are in the form of untied and tied commodity loans on soft terms as well as outright grants.

"It is only natural that the dinar is holding steady," commented Dr. Anani. "Jordan's imports are at a minimum and its exports have not been seriously affected by the war any more than the crisis itself. In effect, the war has not added any new negative element to the Jordanian economy."

Furthermore, Dr. Fanek noted that the commercial

banks were meeting the foreign exchange needs of the market without having to draw from the central bank's reserves. "There are also many Jordanians coming home, bringing in foreign exchange with them," he pointed out.

If anything, Dr. Fanek said he expected international assistance to Jordan during 1991 to exceed its losses in the form of Arab financial assistance.

In the meantime, the Iraqi dinar has hit an all-time low of 100 Jordanian fils each in the open market in the wake of the war. The Iraqi currency, which Baghdad has declared as the only legal tender in Kuwait after annexing the emirate as its 19th province, was being traded at around 135 fils on Jan. 12, three days before the expiry of U.N. deadline for Iraq to leave Kuwait or face war.

The Iraqi dinar was valued at around 180 fils prior to the invasion of Kuwait. It declined gradually to around 160 fils by end of December and plunged in the run-up to the Jan. 15 deadline. (The official rate for the dinar set by the Baghdad government is almost 20 times higher.)

"The main demand for Iraqi dinars used to come from travellers to Iraq," Dr. Fanek pointed out. "With the eruption of the war, there is no travel and thus no demand for the currency, and this would partly account for the drop in value," he said.

Sources familiar with the black market said the Iraqi currency was being bought on Saturday for 110 fils, while some banks offered 100 fils. Other banks have totally suspended all dealings in the Iraqi currency.

"There are many in the market who are buying and stockpiling Iraqi dinars with hope that the currency would regain its value no matter which way the war goes," said one of the sources.

Brazilian industrial output falls

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Brazil's industrial output fell 9.2 per cent in the first 11 months of 1990 compared with a year earlier, the government census bureau said.

Production in November alone was down 9.1 per cent from a year before, said the bureau, which also measures inflation and economic growth.

The hardest hit was the naval construction industry, which showed a decline of 11 per cent in the first 11 months, the bureau said.

Industrial performance this year is expected to be the worst since a 10 per cent decline in 1981, when Brazil entered a three-year recession.

The Yugoslav government accused Serbia of undermining the country's monetary system.

The government has been trying to increase its powers in the economy but the republics have repeatedly blocked its efforts to increase central controls.

Eastern shuts down after 62 years

MIAMI (R) — Eastern Airlines grounded all its planes after two years of struggling with bankruptcy proceedings, bitter labour disputes and questions about its safety practices.

The Miami-based airline, the eighth-largest U.S. carrier and a major operator to the sunny resorts of the Caribbean, stopped flying at midnight Friday.

The airline, formed in 1928, is the largest casualty so far of U.S. price deregulation which began in the late 1970s.

Eastern lost an estimated \$600 million in 1990.

Recent efforts to reverse its fortunes were hampered by the North American recession and Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, which drove fuel prices sharply higher.

Eastern employs 18,000 people worldwide, 7,000 of them in Miami. Employees at Miami International Airport left their jobs Friday night, many in tears and carrying boxes of personal possessions.

"This has been some kind of ride. I just wish I was somewhere else right now," said one Eastern manager who has worked for the airline for more than a dozen years.

Analysts estimate that U.S. airlines lost \$2 billion in 1990, more than twice their previous largest annual loss, due to stiff competition and rising costs.

In the past two months, Pan American World Airways and Continental Airlines have filed for bankruptcy-court protection.

But Eastern had fared worse than most of its rivals. Dogged by questions about its safety measures, the carrier filled only 51 per cent of its passenger seats

New Gorbachev team excludes top liberals

MOSCOW (R) — Seven top liberal advisers have been excluded from the new team to run the Soviet Union alongside President Mikhail Gorbachev, Interfax agency said Saturday.

They included key figures of his perestroika reform.

The independent agency, which has good contacts among liberals who once had Gorbachev's ear, said among the seven were Alexander Yakovlev, regarded as the "father of glasnost" and deputy prime minister Leonid Abalkin.

Also going was Yevgeny Primakov, a Middle East expert who carried out several missions to Washington and Baghdad in the past month, Interfax said.

Two of the seven top economic advisers Stanislav Shatalin and Nikolai Petakov — had already said they were quitting Gorbachev's team because of the slow pace of progress towards establishing a market system.

The remaining two now out side a total reshuffle of the Soviet executive which takes place as hardline communists seem increasingly on the offensive were foreign trade chief and deputy premier Stepan Sitaryan and science adviser Yury Osipyan, according to Interfax.

The agency said Yakovlev, once seen as Gorbachev's closest aide, Primakov and Osipyan were excluded "from the higher organs state power" because of the abolition of the short-lived presidential council, of which they were members.

Abalkin, a liberal economist

who had appeared increasingly uncomfortable since he joined the government in 1989 to head a special unit driving economic reform, and Sitaryan were going "in connection with the reorganisation of the government."

stocks and prospects the conflict will be short-lived, government and industry officials say.

"There are no fears at all of shortages," an official at the oil planning division of the ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) energy agency said Friday.

An official at the agency's oil distribution division said Friday that domestic oil prices had so far remained stable.

The government's Economic Planning Agency (EPA) will work in cooperation with other ministries to prevent any speculative rises in oil and other products due to the war, EPA Director General Michio Ochi told reporters Friday.

He added that he saw no immediate concern that Japan's overall price stability would be endangered by the war.

MITI has already told Japanese oil and trading companies to limit their buying of oil on spot markets to help avoid boarding and speculative price rises, and to use stocks instead, Ochi said. Oil prices had so far shown movements contrary to many analysts' predictions, he added.

MITI has allowed private oil companies to reduce required reserves of oil and oil products to a combined 78 days of consumption by the end of February from the current 82.

Oil stocks on Nov. 30, the latest date for which MITI data are available, stood at 520 million barrels, equivalent to 142 days of consumption in product terms. These comprised private stocks of 88 days and government stocks of 54 days.

"(We) should remain calm as it's unlikely the war will be long-term, and Japan has oil stocks," Kazushige Nagashima, president of Kyodo Oil Company Limited, said in a statement Thursday.

MITI Minister Eiichi Nakan told reporters Thursday: "Japan has oil reserves equivalent to 142 days, and I believe that as long as we use these oil stocks in coordination with other countries, there will be no serious supply shortage."

However, he added, a prolonged Gulf war could hurt Japan, which depends for virtually all its oil on imports, most of which comes from the Gulf.

Kentaro Iwamoto, president of Nippon Oil Company, said Thursday that even if crude oil shipments in the Gulf were stopped completely, there would be no immediate impact on the economy and on living standards.

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U.S. economic fate hangs on Gulf war

WASHINGTON (R) — The fate of the U.S. economy hangs on the outcome of the Gulf war, with a quick victory likely to boost consumer confidence and shorten the recession plaguing the country, economists have said.

They were joined by Eastern's pilots and flight attendants in one of the most bitter labour disputes in airline industry history.

Soon after the strike began, Eastern sought protection from its creditors under the U.S. bankruptcy code.

The judge overseeing the bankruptcy proceedings acceded last April to the unions' demand that Lorenzo be removed, and a trustee appointed in his place.

But by then the deteriorating economic climate hampered the carrier's recovery. Eastern was dealt another blow last summer, when a grand jury investigation raised questions about its aircraft maintenance and safety records.

Some analysts said the airline may still try to survive. Eastern trusted Martin Shugue, a pilot and former senior executive at Pan Am, said this week that Eastern was trying to attract a partner or investor.

"We have scoured the industry for purchasers and partners," Shugue said, adding that Eastern was holding talks with two partners.

He declined to identify them, but industry sources speculate they may be British Airways and United Airlines.

Eastern, owned by continental Airlines Holdings Inc., said Friday it was not planning to sell its assets immediately.

But if consumer buying stabilizes after falling sharply in the fourth quarter of 1990, it will be enough to help swing the economy around, he said.

The U.S. economy had already been showing signs of weakness even before the Iraqi invasion. High world interest rates and tight credit conditions were slowing economic growth.

Federal Reserve Governor

Seger said a quick resolution of the war should help the economy but "it is not going to solve all of our problems."

JORDAN TIMES, SUNDAY, JANUARY 20, 1991 9

"We won't be out of the woods, but there'll be a few less trees," said Robert Hormats, vice chairman of Goldman Sachs International.

A quick victory, with little or no damage to Saudi oil facilities, would help down oil prices, paving the way for lower U.S. inflation and interest rates. That would help restore sagging consumer confidence, leading to more spending and spurring economic growth.

"It would be a significant shot in the arm for the economy," Hormats said.

But David Innes of Aubrey G. Lanston and Co. cautioned that America's other economic problems, particularly its battered banking industry, would act as a drag on the economy for some time.

"We'll still have a significant period of retrenchment," Jones said.

Banks have turned stingy in extending loans after being forced to write off billions of dollars of credits because of the slumping property prices throughout much of the country.

"We've got problems quite apart from this war situation," Senate Banking Committee Chairman Donald Riegle told NBC news shortly after the attack on Iraq and Kuwait began.

President George Bush's chief economic adviser agreed.

"When the Gulf crisis is resolved, oil prices will fall significantly in my opinion, removing a major drag on the economy," Michael Boskin, chairman of the White House's Council of Economic Advisors, said before the attack.

Federal Reserve Governor

Seger said a quick resolution of the war should help the economy but "it is not going to solve all of our problems."

high world interest rates (and) fairly tight credit conditions," he added.

Boskin said the economy shrank significantly in the closing months of last year, adding the downturn could continue until the middle of year before a turn-around occurred.

But the worst of all possible worlds would be a protracted conflict in the Gulf that kept world oil prices and interest rates high, analysts said. Many economists believe the U.S. economy shrank at about a three per cent annual rate in the last three months of 1990.

That would deepen the recession in the United States, sapping consumer and corporate confidence. Economists said that each \$5 a barrel rise in the oil prices shaves about a half percentage point from U.S. economic growth.

If this war effort terminates quickly it will be a positive development," said Riegle, a Michigan Democrat. "If it stretches out it does come at a bad time and we shouldn't fool ourselves about that."

The end of the cold war with the Soviet Union and the huge U.S. budget deficit probably meant Washington would elect not to replace much of the equipment lost in the Gulf war.

But the wild card in the equation is still the price of oil. As long as markets are convinced that the chances of damage to Saudi oil terminals are limited, a steep price rise that would burn the world economy can be avoided, analysts said.

But if that changes, all bets would be off.

OPEC nations unlikely to reduce oil production

BRUSSELS, Belgium (AP) — OPEC has yet to react to the outbreak of hostilities in the Gulf. But while oil prices have dropped sharply, analysts predicted Friday the group is unlikely to curb its gushing output soon.

"I don't think anybody is going to cut back until they are certain about what's going on," said Peter Bogen, associate director of oil markets at Cambridge Energy Research Associates in Paris.

"They have their eyes painted to the Middle East and that's all they are doing," said Pierre Ter-

Zian, editor of the Paris-based newsletter Petrostrategies.

The Organisation of Petroleum Exporting countries (OPEC) said nothing when Iraq invaded fellow group member Kuwait. It has remained silent since U.S. and allied forces began attacking Iraq before dawn Thursday.

There also have been no hints that the oil ministers of the 13 OPEC nations will gather soon to assess the turmoil in the markets.

After Thursday's outbreak of war in the Gulf, the price for light sweet crude tumbled a record \$10.56 a barrel to end the day at \$21.44 on the New York Mercantile Exchange. That was less than its price on Aug. 1, the day before Iraq seized Kuwait.

Saudi Arabia's former oil minister, Ahmad Zaki Yamani, said the oil market would continue pumping as much oil as possible during the crisis. Last August, they suspended their production caps to make up for the loss of four million barrels of Iraqi and Kuwaiti crude, which was pulled off the market by an international oil embargo on trade with Iraq.

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TEMPORARY CLOSURE

Worldwide anti-war protests continue

LONDON (Agencies) — Thousands of people staged demonstrations in Australia, Europe and America in the latest wave of worldwide protests against the Gulf war.

Sydney police said at least 10,000 protesters, chanting "no blood for oil" and "bring the frigates home," marched on the U.S. and Israeli consulates Saturday.

Similar marches were staged in Canberra, Adelaide, Brisbane and Hobart in what organisers said were Australia's biggest peace marches since the Vietnam War.

Australia has sent two frigates and a supply ship to the Gulf.

Police helicopters hovered over Rome Saturday morning as thousands of young demonstrators covered on the central Piazza Venezia in the latest of a series of demonstrations throughout Italy since the outbreak of hostilities.

"Maybe we're the mad ones because we want peace," said one banner. "We are all losers," said another.

Dutch anti-war demonstrators clashed with police in central Amsterdam Friday night when officers on horseback moved to clear about 500 people blocking one of the city's main road junctions.

One policeman and one demonstrator were slightly injured in the fighting and a 26-year-old man was arrested, police said.

Earlier, 2,000 people shouting anti-American slogans marched from the central Dam Square to the U.S. consulate to protest against the war in the Gulf.

The Netherlands has placed its two frigates in the Gulf under U.S. command and has also contributed ammunition and anti-aircraft missiles to the U.S.-led alliance of Western and Arab states ranged against Iraq.

2 million protest in Spain

In Spain, more than two million people stopped work and thousands of schoolchildren and

students joined demonstrations against Spanish involvement in the Gulf war Friday.

Unions said workers throughout Spain heeded their call for a two-hour stoppage to support calls for an end to hostilities and the recall of three Spanish warships helping enforce the U.N. embargo on Iraq.

The government, responsible for Spain's first involvement in a foreign war since a campaign in Morocco in the 1920s, won endorsements from the congress — the Lower House of parliament — Friday for a resolution calling on Iraq to implement Security Council resolutions.

"The government is allowing a divide to develop between itself and the people," said Antonio Redondo, secretary general of the General Workers Union, Spain's biggest.

Socialist Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez responded to left-wing attacks on his support for allied intervention by reiterating that Madrid would provide only logistical and medical backing. But he said Spain must firmly condemn Iraqi aggression.

"We condemn the Iraqi attack on Israel, a country that has remained out of the conflict in agreement with the international community's demands," he told congress.

Thousands of protesters across the United States and Canada took to the streets again Friday to demonstrate against the war in the Gulf and at least 150 arrests were made.

Some of the largest demonstrations were on the west coast, where at least 100 students were arrested in Los Angeles and 50 people, including clergymen, were detained by police in San Francisco.

In Washington, thousands gathered in Lafayette Park, across from the White House, but no arrests were reported.

Although not as many people demonstrated Friday as earlier in the week, organisers said protests possibly by hundreds of

thousands of people would be held at the weekend.

The California Highway Patrol said Friday it was sending five squads of officers, a total of 55 men, from the southeastern part of the state to San Francisco to help deal with protests there, particularly one planned for Saturday that organisers say could draw more than 25,000 people.

Campus police at the University of California at Los Angeles Friday arrested more than 100 of 300 students who had occupied a university building to stage a peace sit-in.

"The arresting is taking place very peacefully. The students are simply lining up to be booked," campus police spokesman Peter Dolan said.

In San Francisco 50 protesters were charged with illegally entering and demonstrating on government property after they scaled the walls of the headquarters of the U.S. Sixth Army.

At a "funeral procession" through the city earlier, marchers carried a mock coffin draped with the American flag.

One of the demonstrators in Washington was Conrad Smith, an assistant attorney general for environmental enforcement in Vermont, who held a sign saying, "This Vermonter says: Militarily strong. Morally weak."

Smith said he left work to go to Washington because "it just didn't seem right to go to work and pretend everything was all right."

The streets of Chicago were quiet following a 3,000-strong demonstration Thursday night. In Philadelphia, demonstrators staged a day-long peace vigil while hundreds of small protests were staged throughout Canada.

Protest in S. Africa

In South Africa, at least 150 men, women and children were arrested Friday while attempting to protest outside the U.S.

embassy against America's military presence in the Gulf.

Another 100 people protested outside the U.S. consulate in Durban, across the country on South Africa's Indian Ocean coast.

An initial contingent of about 30 people, mostly Muslims, had gathered on the sidewalk outside the embassy in Cape Town, where police awaited them.

A police officer announced over a bullhorn the demonstrators had one minute to disperse, and the crowd walked to an island median in the road outside the embassy.

The contingent of about 50 police then surrounded the group and arrested 27 people.

A larger crowd of people, mostly Muslims leaving nearby mosque after Friday prayers, then gathered on the island median, and police arrested more than 100 of them.

Children who told reporters they were 8 years old were among those arrested. Many protesters were kaffiyehs.

The protesters held placards saying, "Bush: Wanted dead or alive for crimes against humanity," and chanted "Bush out, Americans go home." They sang Arabic songs praising God as they were arrested.

A police spokesman said young children and elderly people arrested would be released.

Organisers said they sought permission from the Cape Town City Council and a magistrate to hold protest, but received no response.

Police ordered the protesters away before a picket could be formed, the organisers said.

In Durban, a group calling itself the Natal Committee Against Imperialist Wars handed a memorandum on their position to a U.S. consulate official, the government-run South African Broadcasting Corp. reported.

Police said traffic was halted around the consulate because of the protest.

Police spokesman said

young children and elderly people arrested would be released.

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